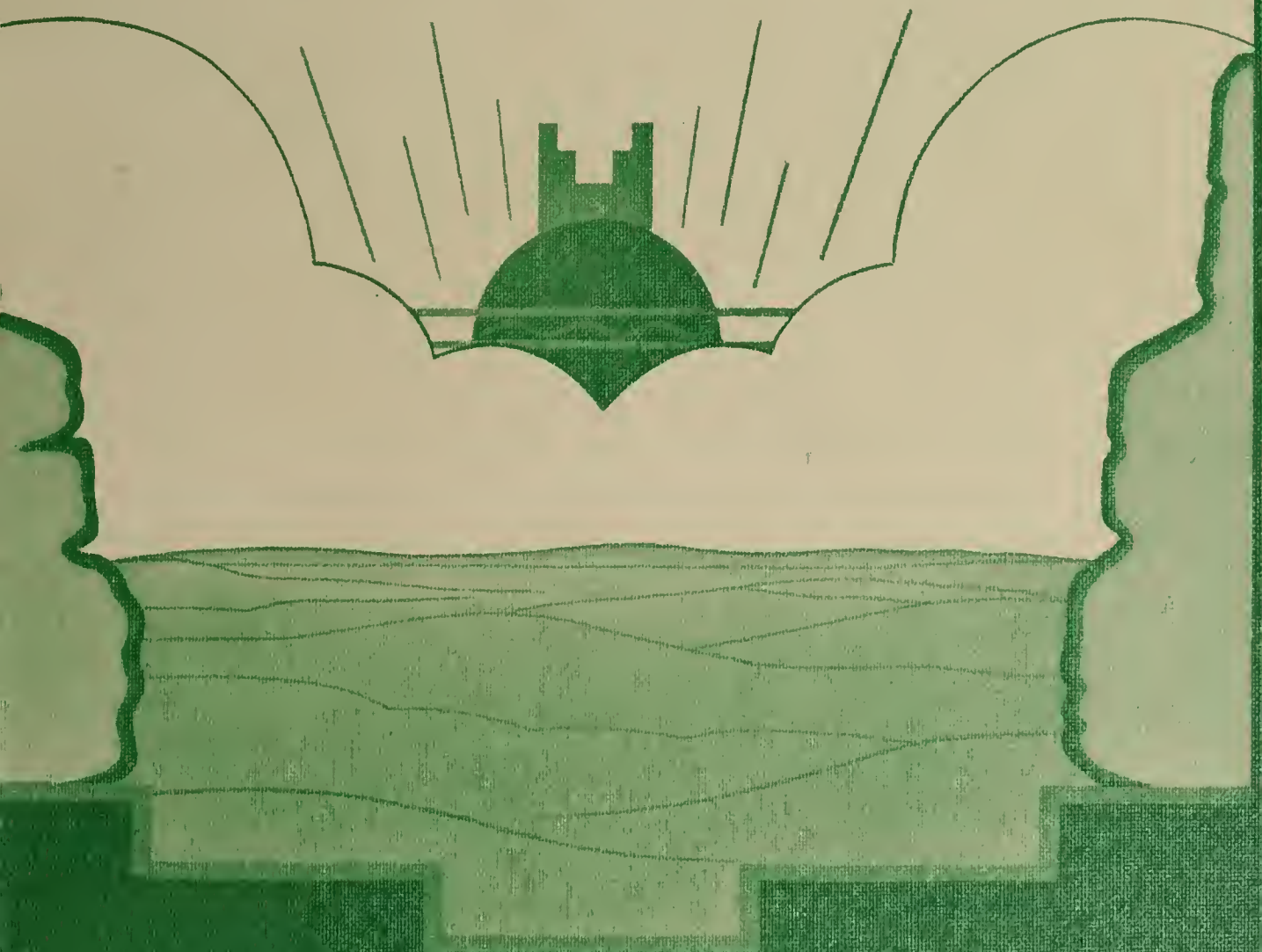


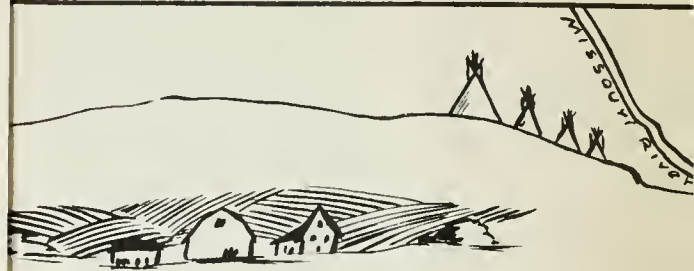


PRAIRIE POETS





COLLEGE OF THE PACIFIC



Wide open spaces



Indian Country

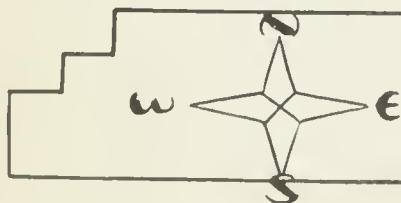




Chart of South Dakota

By O. Howe

From the collection of the



San Francisco, California
2008



The Level Land

*The hills have closed behind us,
The hills that bound us
To our little sheltered freehold.
Now breath comes hot
With strange desire.
This is the land
That teases men to follow
Where, with slow, spacious curves,
It slips away
Down far horizon edges
To which the sky sweeps also
In great untrameled arcs.*

*This is the land
That dwarfs
Men and the homes of men,
All their continuous cornfields,
Spread of alfalfa,
Cattle-punctured meadows.
Its streams wind leisurely
As becomes a level land.
Its groves are dusky rhythms on the plain,
A fringe against the blue.
On this cosmic stretch
Towns merge and blend
With the outlying prairie.*

*Here may men see
Beyond the me and mine,
The here and now.
This is a land
Made for democracy.*

A.M.J.

PRAIRIE POETS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF VERSE

OF THE

South Dakota State Poetry Society

1927-1949

DEDICATED TO

ITS FOUNDER AND FIRST PRESIDENT
AND EDITOR OF PASQUE PETALS

1926-1937

JAMES C. LINDBERG

AND TO

BESSIE L. LINDBERG

PUBLISHER

1939-1948

He gave his life up wholly to his dream
Of making vocal all the beauty pent
In hearts without the knowledge they could sing.
Beauty and pain and courage and despair,
He knew that each was basic and aspiring;
That sordidness protests against the wrongs
That clutter up the road that leads to God.
His was the gentle fostering of the fearful;
He helped the dumb ache find a healing voice;
He helped the faltering tongue to speak forth clearly.
There bloom from his spent life a thousand flowers;
He lives again in all their valiant song. —A.M.J.

EDITED BY

ADELINE M. JENNEY

COVER AND END PAPERS BY

OSCAR HOWE

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Published by the LUND PRESS, INC.
Minneapolis, Minnesota
1949

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THE FOREWORD

PRAIRIE POETS is the fourth anthology issued by The South Dakota State Poetry Society. Creative interest was manifested in territorial days. By 1898, "Dakota Rhymes," edited by two Yankton college men, Gustaf Wenzlaf and Wade Burliegh (grandson of an early governor), had run through four editions. By 1918, there were two editions of O. W. Coursey's "Literature of South Dakota," with an anthology.

In May, 1926, PASQUE PETALS (with its reference to the state flower) was born as a four-page monthly, published by Prof. J. C. Lindberg and Rudolf Ruste, at Northern State Normal College. By 1927, it had become a 16-page monthly magazine, which in its over twenty-three years has never missed an issue and today has nearly three hundred subscribers of which ninety-five are patrons.

In October, 1927, so much interest was felt in the creative writing venture that The South Dakota State Poetry Society was organized, with PASQUE PETALS as its organ. Today its influence is national, for "once a South Dakotan always a South Dakotan" brings contributors from many states.

In 1928, Prof. Lindberg published its first anthology; in 1930, he brought out "Fifteen South Dakota Poets." In 1935, he and Mrs. Gertrude Gunderson published another general anthology, again with some over 100 contributors and 200 poems.

In his last message to The South Dakota State Poetry Society, Prof. Lindberg set the twentieth year, 1947, as time for another anthology. Conditions following the war have been delaying factors, but his wish now finds fulfilment in PRAIRIE POETS.

Most of the poems in the present book, as those in the former anthologies have appeared in PASQUE PETALS. Many of them have been copied by magazines and newspapers and read over the radio; many of them have received prizes in the State Fair Literature and other contests. Citations of all these would be impossible. Only where a poem has appeared first in some other magazine has note of the fact been made here.

Our state institutions of collegiate grade have been uniformly gracious in contributing photographs of their campuses and copies of their college

songs. Loris Thomas should be mentioned for her gift of the beautiful lumiprint of Sioux Falls College campus. To all these we express our thanks. We thank also the State Highway Department for use of photographs.

A fine spirit of co-operation among the contributors has made this volume possible. Many have helped, but Mrs. Elma Scheel, Mrs. Marjorie Drewry, H. E. Beebe and Miss Gertrude Webster have undertaken some particular tasks. We must all regret that circumstances prevented every one of our writers from entering their poems. The desire was to make it fully representative of the creative work in our state; yet a heartening and larger number than ever before are included and it is interesting to note that twenty-eight of those whose poems appeared in the 1928 volume reappear here.

We hope that this collection of poems will meet the need and find response in the schools and homes in the state. As regards poetry societies and poetry magazines throughout the nation, our society and our magazine may claim honorable and vigorous seniority. There is that in the air and the blood of this prairie state that leads to creative art; and it is our pleasure and our responsibility, as a group, so to stimulate this that every one with talent shall have opportunity to develop and express it; thus the next anthology shall be a nobler volume.

THE COVER

When Oscar Howe, the well-known Sioux artist, consented to design the cover and end papers for PRAIRIE POETS, those who planned the book felt a dream was to be realized. It seemed beautifully fitting that such expression of the ancient, indigenous poetry of the early peoples of the prairie should introduce that of this later day.

For Oscar Howe, form and color are all fraught with lyric meaning; and in his composition he has used the symbolism of the Indian tradition and his feeling for the Dakota country. The high cost of reproduction made the showing of the beautiful color gradations of his design impossible. Imagination must give it the green of the plains and uplands, the sinister grey of the Badlands, the dusky verdancy of the Black Hills, and the wide, rich, blue stretch of prairie sky with its sunrises and sunsets and its glittering stars. But the design itself is dynamic and dramatic. And note how, borne up with the strength of suggestion in buffalo horn and billowing cloud, soars the aspiring, divine Bird of Truth. How much he has said with nuanced line!

ADELINE M. JENNEY

Valley Springs, S. D.
November, 1949

OLD COTTONWOOD

Old cottonwood beside the stream,
Low-murmuring through the night and day,
You are so ancient, you must dream
Of deeds and men long passed away.

“A tremor stirs me through and through:
I was a stripling growing fast
From wind and sun and prairie dew;
I quaked as bison thundered past.

“In youth, I marked the trail, rough-made
By covered-wagons treking west
To seek new homes; beneath my shade,
The road-worn travelers found their rest.

“I reached my strength, my prime, and now,
Became a lovers’ safe retreat
Or horse-thieves swung from my shuddering bough;
All life was passing near my feet.

“I grew to gianthood, head stanch
To dare the storm. With endless sky
And prairie feeding heart and branch,
I lived with men, too strong to die.

“Years passed; my limbs grew stiff and shorn;
Now cars rushed by with maddening speed;
My once-green leafage, pale and torn,
I stood aside from life and need.”

Old cottonwood, about to fall
In mortal crash, you still shall be
The spirit of the plains to all —
The prairie’s most beloved tree.

Amy Bruner Almy

LAKE KAMPESKA

Lake Kampeska, shining water,
Under sunlit skies of blue,
Hear the westwind in your willows
Sing a lullaby to you.

Gem of beauty on the prairies,
Round you still wild roses blow
And your silvery waves are dancing
As they did long, long ago,

When upon your rounded hillsides
Herds of buffalo could roam
And among your reeds and grasses
Deer and antelope made their home.

Lake Kampeska, dreaming water,
Campfires gleamed around your shore;
Indian maids danced in the starlight
In the days that are no more.

Still the moonlight loves to linger
On your rocks where shadows creep,
And your jeweled wavelets beating
On the sands lull me to sleep.

APPLE BLOSSOMS

Sweet apple blossoms, ever dear to me,
You bring life's morning back to memory,
When trees were laden with your fragrant snow,
And we were young and happy, gay and free.

Sweet-scented blossoms, drifting down the lane,
Help me forget life's struggle, care and pain,
And see the sunshine through the clouds of gray;
Then I may know life has not been in vain.

Bonita Anderson

SIMPLICITY

There seems to be persistent strife
To make a showing in this life,
To save for houses high and fine
Or sacrifice for thrills and wine.
While some folks hoard for fancy clothes,
What others strive for no one knows.
The little things of life are free:
A friendly chat, a cup of tea,
The sharing of some happiness,
The dignity of simple dress.
The wealth that nature has on hand
Is given those who understand.
The little things of life are free!
Why dwarf them for the lack of fee?
To what avail the grasping gait?
Life passes by, Time cannot wait.

RECOMPENSE

The happy days of life transcend the sad,
As waking hours exceed those of the night.
There are uncounted reasons to be glad
And death is but a stepping stone to light.
The path of childhood is a time of joy;
The road to high adventure is ahead.
Youth takes each shining moment as a toy,
His unawareness shelters him from dread.
At last when heads are gray and faces seamed
And one by one the best of friends must part,
Is this the end of all the dreams we dreamed?
The golden memories are in the heart.
Now, looking back along life's changing miles,
For every tear we find a thousand smiles.

Frances Barton

MAIN STREET IN ABERDEEN

So many gentle souls have walked this street
That we, who dream, in thought might meet
Them still this day, if there we strolled
To watch the album leaves unfold.

Ben Goodsell — to my daughter's voice most kind —
A-hurrying now a new harp string to find;

Here's Dr. Seymour, pithy sermon in hand
To help slow churches to the Promised Land;

With thoughtful mien, Dorothea Heinz scans
A set of heavenly library plans.

So pass they by, on work intent,
But greeting all with similar bent.

See, Jessie Harris sweetly smiled
And turned to help a crippled child;

Approaching, as we now expectant stand,
Lindberg and Denison come hand-in-hand.

The golden street may claim this throng
But cannot take from us their song;
For we, who dream, can even now meet
Those gentle souls who walked this street.

SPRING IN DAKOTA AND HOLLYWOOD

Spring is the same everywhere,
A certain quickening of the air!

The prairie crocus blues a patch
As Hollywood Hills green to match;
The thousand-footed rain the while
Sows flowers along the desert mile.

So nature richly points the way
For all gratefully to say,
"Thank God for spring, today!"

Hiram E. Beebe

CYCLE

From the silence of dust and hushed dead bogs,
From the voiceless tracks of the vast peat bogs,
From the slime and the soundless mud I came,
For a moment touched by immortal flame —;
Then back to the quiet of windless land
And the far-flung spaces of restless sand.

From the depth of a heart was I born,
A dream,

From the sigh of the wind at the morn,
To seem

The goal of life,
The aim of all strife,
The glory inspiring a Gothic tower,
The hand attempting to gild a flower.

The centre of rife
In uncertain life,
Lost in this universe have I gone
To seem

But the ghost of an echo of song,
A dream.

From the breathless rapture of hidden hope,
From the storm-tossed oak of the distant slope,
From the golden bells of the spring I came,
Holding one moment the veil of world fame —;
Then back to the darkness of deep despair
And the mute aloneness of desert air.

INDIFFERENCE

So proud and stilly cold
The tall trees stand,
Their thoughts from old
Unknown to man,
Beneath a fold
Of pale indifferent snow.

Catherine Bradshaw

RICHES

Do you know what it means to dwell in the woods
In a hillcrest cabin high
Above a green valley, where a silver creek flows
And pine-clad hills meet the sky,

Where bird-choirs invite you to greet the dawn,
As its gold borders the eastern hill,
And you gaze in awe as the morning breaks
And let your soul sing, as it will?

Have you never heard the voice of the wood,
Or thrilled to its peace and calm,
As you wandered along the grassy trails
And felt in your heart a psalm;

Or smelled the fragrance of wild growing things
And the scent of the stately pine,
Wafted along by each vagrant breeze
Stirring silvery leaves that shine?

If you've never opened your very soul
To nature's bounties so free,
You have missed the greatest of all the rich gifts
God offers to you and to me!

THE HILLS IN AUTUMN

The magic of autumn pervades the Black Hills
The charm of October enhances and fills
The land with enchantment; God's presence is there.
His hand touched the trees to make them so fair.

Down sunlit vales and through wooded terrain
Breezes stir leafy harp-strings in chanting refrain;
Yellow aspen and birch, harmonizing with pine,
Lend colors that blend with red sumac and vine.

Our spirits blend too with the peace that prevails
On an October day, along loved mountain trails!

Lila E. Bragstad

LOOKING NORTH FROM SNAKE BUTTE

The white of winter has been displaced by green of spring.
I stand a-top Snake Butte and look far north.
The vision frees my soul of all that's petty, small,
And brings a sense of things of greater worth
Than gold or things material.

The green of prairie grass and man-sown grain
Gives promise of a harvest, following seedtime.
Seeing those miles of golden carpet, unrolled, shining,
Will be reward enough for the long climb
To reach the top of Snake Butte.

I stand a-top Snake Butte and gaze far northward,
Freeing my soul of all that's petty, small;
The majesty of distances, the farflung prairie,
Gives knowledge of God's strength and makes me tall
In spirit and contentment.

THE LUNCHEON NOOK

"I know the place we'll plan to reach by noontime;
You haven't seen it, for you've never come this way.
I've kept it secret since the first I saw it,
The perfect setting for our lunch today."

It was just a tiny, little, grassy meadow,
Almost encircled by a narrow, trickling stream.
The high, far bank seemed to enfold it
And protect it in a beauty, calm, serene.

The brilliant autumn colors on that far bank,
The song of crickets, the tang of autumn air,
The deep blue sky, bowl-arched above us,
Gave banquet flavor to our lunch-box fare.

Isadore C. Brooking

SOME SURVIVE

The cold storm sweeps
From a leaden sky,
Threatening small life,
And meadow larks die . . .
But some survive.

The armed troops meet
And their weapons ply,
Menacing each life,
And many men die . . .
But some survive.

The storms of life
Assault us all,
And in the struggle
Many men fall . . .
But some survive.

EVANESCENCE

One cannot hold in memory too long
An evanescent thing:
A bird's song is soon forgotten
Unless heard frequently;
The pink of dawn fades
When not seen every morning;
The feel of rain becomes but prayerful wishing
If for long absent;
The perfume of apple blossoms is lost
In too extended memory.
So, with love, which, to be remembered
Must constantly be renewed.

Mae Chase Brown

ANNIVERSARY PIECE

Let's go adventuring, unfettered and free;
We of blithe spirit were not meant to be
Held by the bonds of monotony.

Let us go walking
Down a green lane,
When it's washed with the dew
Or sweet with fresh rain.

Let us go riding
Down Blue Ridge Divide;
My heart sings a love song
With you by my side.

Let us go sailing
Down the Bright River;
You and I always find
Adventure to-gether.

I MUST CLIMB HILLS

Hills might be my nemesis,
Steep, slippery hills,
Where feet all but refuse to cling; —
But I **MUST** climb hills,
To gain the broader view.

Mae Chase Brown

RUSHMORE MEMORIAL

On Rushmore's granite crags, we carved a shrine
To giants in our land;
Serene, majestic, powerful in tone and line.
For ages it shall stand
To inspire a nation, virile, strong,
A symphony in stone — imprisoned song
Of bold crusaders, heroes, who, perchance, have left
To weaker souls than they
The burden of a nation's weal. And, thus bereft
Of guides to point the way,
We turn to these staunch builders and renew
Our prayer for vision, sure and true,
Our pledge of fealty to our country's good
In re-awakened faith in brotherhood.

BAD LANDS OF SOUTH DAKOTA

(Wonderland of America)

Ten thousand wide acres of waste, desert land,
Of hummocks and ledges and slow drifting sand —
The Bad Lands — that fascinate, lure or repel —
A habitat fit for the legions of hell,
Wrought here by a devil's iniquitous tools,
For weird, fabled monsters, for ogres and ghouls.
The ridges, the gorges, the dark, hidden caves,
The vast, rocky hillocks like petrified waves,
Tall ramparts that guard barren valleys below,
Tumultuous strata of sands all aglow
With red, brown and yellow or lavender hues —
A grim land, a strange land, that artist or muse
Might picture on canvas or song that would tell
Its wonders and terrors, its grandeur as well.

Daisy Dean Butler



SNOWSTORM IN THE HILLS

A snowstorm swept through the Hills last night
And left a mantle of dazzling white
On rocks and peaks. On spruce and pine,
On cedar, oak and trailing vine,
Are lacy festoons, draped with care —
Frail, glistening garlands of frosty air.

The Hills were lovely before the storm,
In autumn colors so rich and warm;
But their wintry purity seems more fair,
Their snowy coverlet, jeweled, rare; —
A world unmarred, unspoiled, serene;
A world that's perfect — a lovely dream.

FOG OVER THE HILLS

Like tattered, trailing cobwebs,
Soft mists enclose the Hills
And float down rugged canyons
Above the mountain rills
Quite hushed in gentle smother
Of fogs that now embrace
The earth. Dark spruce and aspen
Are close wrapped in filmy lace
Of moisture-laden zephyrs
Which soften harsher lines
Of tow'ring crags; — a fairy world,
Where fragrant, spicy pines
Pin lightly to the hilltops
Pale wisps of silv'ry clouds —
A jewelled, shining mantle
That hill and vale enshrouds.

Daisy Dean Butler

STAR DUST

This is a night made for dreaming;
Where shall my gypsy thoughts roam?
Silver-winged raptures are gleaming
Far from the humdrum of home.

Where shall my gypsy thoughts roam?
High on some mountain snow-crested?
Far from the humdrum of home,
Up where the wild eagle nested?

High on some mountain snow-crested;
Up where the plumed water falls;
Up where the wild eagle nested;
Blue mist and eerie wind-calls.

Up where the plumed water falls
Silver-winged raptures are gleaming;
Blue mist and eerie wind-calls —
This is a night *made* for dreaming!

SILVER ETCHING

The river rests in winter's quiet keeping;
Stark, naked willows etch the frosty sky;
The only sound, a stealthy, padded creeping
Of timid, furtive creatures edging by.

But, though the night is held in icy fingers
And down the lane an eerie north wind whines,
A witching beauty grows where moonlight lingers
To point a mystic pathway through the pines.

Robert E. Caldwell

COMPASSION

April 11, 1940

I cannot plant my pansy bed in peace, this spring,
For thinking of those tulip beds so gay,
Whose upturned faces in a thousand vivid hues,
Hiding guns, must strive to frighten death away.

How can I take such pains with one petunia
Whose roots the rabid cutworm seeks to sever,
When roots of entire nations, blasted, bleeding,
Lie quivering in the wake of war's endeavor?

My poppies, nodding gaily, bid me pause to think
Of my young kinsmen and their like, who lie
Slumbering in Flanders from that other war,
Now to become ghost targets from the sky.

I cannot go about my pleasant peacetime tasks,
For picturing in imagination's eye,
Those other peaceful peoples we call friends,
With hopes for generations doomed to die.

RE-EVALUATION

(Autumn 1942)

When I go down into my garden now —
Its scented beauty framed in tranquil bliss —
I meditate in token of remembrance
That someone gave his life for this.

When friends drop in for tea or friendly game,
Or we sit down in comfort just to chat,
I'm not unmindful of the thought
Of someone giving all for that.

And when I lay me down at night to sleep,
Secure in promise of tomorrow,
I know the price of this security
Will surely be another's sorrow.

On land and sea and in the air —
That tyrants may not take all this away —
I shan't forget that on those distant battle-fronts
Someone laid down his life today.

Eloise Smith Carpenter

I LOVE MINORITIES

I love the company of minorities:
That little group of friends of Socrates
Who came to him that final dragging night
Four hundred years before the guiding light
Of Heaven illumined the Bethlehem hills,
A sacred spot within my memory fills.
I love the company of minorities.

I love the company of minorities.
With poor Columbus, that lone Genoese,
My spirit would have traveled scoffing Spain,
For, oh, the gleam within that visioning brain
Was kindling far-flung beacons for a world:
A timid, doubting, shackle-making world.
I love the company of minorities.

I love the company of minorities.
I note Domremy's maiden's hand release
The shepherd crook, and with a burning sword
Lead forth the men of France, by her zeal stirred;
And then I see Joan's pleading eyes uplift
Until the flames blur all with deadly drift.
I love the company of minorities.

I love the company of minorities.
I see the Prince of Peace with sorrowing eyes
Gaze on the hounding mass — the human flood
That rages blindly for his sinless blood;
For life, unfolding to me as I plod,
Links the scorned few in fellowship with God.
I love the company of minorities.

Will Chamberlain

SOMETIMES LIKE A LONE BIRD

Sometimes, like a lone bird a-nesting
Within a desert island's mute domain,
Seems this thing — self, far space and dim investing
With loneliness the spirit's one refrain.

There is the morning and the evening greeting,
The cheery word and comrade smile at noon,
But oh, the colorless, the casual meeting,
The puzzled look and purpose out of tune.

Vaguely our fellow-beings, viewing
What passes as our worldly entity,
Accept the camouflage and its renewing
Until the soul half-sadly journeys — free.

So, like a bird within a voiceless valley,
A valley hidden from the thought of men,
I mark my hours, while God alone keeps tally
Of life too strange for human eye or pen.

THESE LITTLE MOMENTS

Like as a rose that thrills to loveliness
Yet is aware it all must shortly miss,
Or as a leaf that raptures as it goes
To find a bed beneath oncoming snows,
So be it mine exquisitely to view
This world I know while waiting for the new.
I cannot scan beyond the mystic lines
That hold me fast like strange and tangled vines,
But only hope to move out on the sea
Having my dreams as Captain brave with me.

Will Chamberlain

ALWAYS A DAWN

There will never be a day without a dawn;
Never a day without an end;
Never a heart so grievously torn
The thread of God's love cannot tenderly mend.

Never a night so hidden in darkness
That a silver star cannot push its way through,
Throwing its halo of friendly brightness
To lighten some heart, its courage renew.

Never a shower of spring's icy raindrops
That later the sun will not melt away,
And a brave little flower, face uplifted,
Will perfume the hours of the closing day.

Never a day that God is not watching,
Faithful Physician, to ease earth's pain,
Knowing that flowers, starlight and sunlight,
With a new dawn of hope will return again.

TREE HOMAGE

Who bends his knee before a tree
Pays homage to Divinity —
Creative artist who could see
Man's need of comfort from a tree:
A shelter from the storm and sun;
A peaceful spot when day is done,
Wherein the soul may recreate
The thoughts that day would desecrate;
Each whispering leaf, a little prayer
His heart and God's tree jointly share.

Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe

SPRINGTIME

Springtime will come again,
Bluebirds will sing again,
Flowers will bloom again,
Sad hearts love and hope again,
When springtime comes.

Snow will melt and turn to rills,
Running down the greening hills,
Freed from winter's icy chills,
Filled with joy and magic thrills,
When springtime comes.

Earth will open wide her heart,
To let the sun its warmth impart,
So all imprisoned seeds may start
Giving earth a new green chart,
When springtime comes.

Daffodils will dance with glee,
New leaves decorate each tree,
Little winds say, "Wait and see
Other miracles to be,
When springtime comes."

ALWAYS NEAR

A day never passes that you are not near,
In a sunbeam, a flower, a star shining clear;
In a song of a bird flying high in the blue,
In the gold of the sunset, the sparkle of dew,
In all that is lovely I find you, my dear,
And a day never passes that you are not near.

Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe

FOREST FIRE IN THE BLACK HILLS IN 1936

Buffeting, ravaging waves of smoke,
Thundering crash of falling trees,
Hoarse, sharp cries of exhausted men,
Echo through the acrid breeze.
Tortured trees, in the crimson glow,
Writhe and twist in their mortal pain,
As men, breathing-in the bitter smoke,
Pray the good God to send His rain.

Pray Him to stop the holocaust
Of timbered acres, the growth of years,
The sinews of strength, the need of the world.
God! how they fight, hearts filled with fears,
Watching fire-fingers tear apart
That curtain of smoke, that pall of death,
Wherein destruction, havoc and loss,
Wreak their lust with Hadean breath.

Eyes, uplifted where tree-kings tower,
Bravely waiting the coming foe,
Powerless, trapped, helpless to stir
Against this red-eyed "God of Woe;"
Scions formed of their flesh and blood,
Around them stand in terror's welt,
Sons and daughters begot of them —
Sacrifice to this furnace smelt.

Tottering, as the flames eat in,
Searing their heart, stilling its beat,
Giant arms flung to the fiery sky
Where all hell's minions seem to meet.
Wavering, crashing, they plunge to their death,
Monarchs prone on their funeral pyre,
Like India's devotees in their pit —
May they find Nirvana through trail of fire.

Ae'lis Churchill Chaphe

CATHEDRAL OF PINES

The Black Hills

Through aisles of arched cathedral pines,
Where golden fingers of the sun rest in benediction
Upon their tall, plumed heads,
One turns instinctively, with awe and reverence,
To lift the eyes with them into the fragrant, scented air.

Only Divinity understands their origin;
But we who are finite may share in their glorious beauty
And majestic dignity.
The waves of the world beat in vain
Against this tree-vaulted place of worship,
Where the organ notes of the pines
Sound a diapason to hearts wearied of life and its struggles.

Here, the restless heart grows quiet;
Peace descends as a dove upon the soul of one
Who seeks;
Standing thus exalted in thought,
We remember the voice of the prophet —
“Ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”

The first whispered song of the world
Must have been the crooning lullaby of the tree-leaves
In the Garden of Eden;
The same song that today the heart listens to in this hushed
Silence of God’s forest of singing pines.

Let the heart forget its sorrow in the organ notes of trees,
Where the needled prayer-mat calls for man to bend his knees
Before the mighty grandeur of these monarchs, ages old,
Who give protective friendship to the seeking heart, grown cold.

Ae’lis Churchill Chaphe

A PRAYER

God, give me strength to-day,
That I may lift my head and say
I trust in all Thy acts.

Give me a faith that, through all ill,
Believes that all things will fulfill
Their time and proper place.

Father, I ask that Thou wilt feed my soul,
And, as I feel the blest tide roll,
Give me sweet peace and calm.

COMMUNICANT

When I partake of this your spirit feast,
I eat the bread — your body, broken, slain,
And think of those whom it has saved — I least!
Then am I born in spirit strength again.

And when I drink this symbol of your pain,
The blood you shed to take away my sin,
I pray that faith in you may never wane,
And that to purer life I've entered in.

You bless me then with quiet, thankful peace,
And lift me high unto the realms above;
I know, if I believe, 'twill never cease,
And that I have the gift of perfect love.

M. A. Chase

I'D LIKE TO UNDERSTAND

Tonight the sky's a misty blue.
How different it appears
From last night's deep, dark indigo,
With stars like sparkling tears;
Or from the sky before the storm,
Majestic in its might,
Bedecked in proud and haughty clouds
Which hid the moon from sight.
I wonder, as I gaze above,
Just how the Master's hand
Can fashion each so perfectly —
I'd like to understand.

IN THE STILL, COOL NIGHT

I walk alone through the still, cool night;
No sound its loveliness mars,
Except the hollow crunch of the ice
As I walk beneath the stars.
I am alone in the still, cool night,
None other seems to exist;
The sky, immeasurable, reaches beyond
Till it fades away in the mist.
I dream alone in the still, cool night
That no one can ever see
The same vast beauty which now enfolds
The serene, calm earth and me.

Elizabeth L. Christensen

I HAVE FELT MANY WINGS

I have felt many winds.
I have felt
Cool wind,
Soft wind,
Dry wind,
Disappointing wind,
Discouraging wind,
Lifting wind,
Bitter wind,
Wind that lashed me,
Wind that will still lash me.

O Winds,
That I have felt,
O Winds
That I shall feel,
Do not blow my life away!

GOD AND THE EARTHMEN

God became angry,
For the earthmen always spoke of their
Great knowledge.
God told a learned man with gray hair
To write down all the knowledge
Of the Earthmen.
The gray-haired man searched and wrote
And scratched his head and argued with himself,
And muttered to himself and put his fingers on his chin
And soon brought the sum total of earthmen's knowledge
To God.
He took the sum total of earthmen's knowledge
Out of a sealed envelope
And read, "If".
Later, God took the sum total
And put it into His right hip pocket.

Maurice Clancy

MY BIRTH

I do not remember my birth,
But I choose to think of it
As the dawn of a summer day.
I rose from my dark bed,
Stood poised beneath the blue and portly arch of heaven,
Felt the mists of vanishing night on my face,
And then trod the sunlight.

Out of the silence the Psalm of Life issued,
Rising and falling on a rippling sea of melody.
I heard it as I strode through the darkness, into the light.
I heard it as I was borne from the throbbing unknown
Into the existing strange.

I felt the thunder of the mind,
The lightning of the breast,
The vast pourings of the heart.
Ruthlessly, gently, the storm fashioned me
Into a man.

MY DEATH

I have finally
Finished the sweet task of living life.
I wish to listen to its outlet song —
The soft dirge filtering through the dusk;
I wish to leave earth's artificial house
And rest in the valley;
I wish to watch the transition
From the bright road to the shadowed path;
I wish to hear the late bird twitter his last, quiet song;
I wish to see the sun set as it once rose,
The fallen leaves waiting for the vanishing rain.
I wish to hear the Shepherd with the placid voice
Return His flock to the fold.
Let the obscure shapes, the sounds of after day,
The stars, utter their echoes.
Then let the aria of fathomless space begin.

Maurice Clancy

WHERE IS HEAVEN GONE?

Where's Heaven gone? That shining town
Our fathers sang of long ago
Has faded like the sunset glow
Across the west when night comes down.

The shadowed door of death that gave
On fields of endless life and light —
My mother thought — to modern sight
Is just the black mouth of a grave.

We walk by science, not by faith —
The X-ray shows no human soul,
The telescope no heavenly goal
Nor camera the thinnest wraith.

Yet you, O Science, parallel
Those mystic dreams we had of yore;
In your improved design for war
You've made a most convincing Hell.

And in more genial moods your power
Projects a heavenly device,
An easeful gadget-paradise
Where life is one long cocktail hour.

But looming on your future course,
As your late master stroke declares,
A ghastly home-made Doomsday flares
In dustclouds of atomic force.

A flash! and the dead race of men
On a dead planet whirls away,
But, Science, on your Judgment Day
Your dead aren't due to rise again.

"So laugh," they say, "while yet we last.
Buzz on through life's brief episode
Like giggling tourists on the road,
Going nowhere but going fast."

But such a view to such as I
Like a doomed prisoner's appears —
Just pace your little cell of years
Until you're summoned out to die.
Can there be night without a dawn?
My soul — I have a soul! — would see
That high trail to eternity
Which we have lost. Where's Heaven gone?

BIRCH FIRE

Sitting by a birch fire I am well contented
Till a whiff of burnt bark curls into the room —
Incense of the forest, spicy and sweet-scented,
But an old disquiet stirs at that perfume.
Deep in my days is that remembered flavor;
Far in my years beyond a common search,
Yet the hissing white bark with its dainty savor
Brings back her image in the glow of the birch.
When I sat at her hearth, blissful in devotion,
Always by a birch fire, never pine or oak,
Fondly I laughed at her pretty-pretty notion
She must have white wood and aromatic smoke.
And the hours danced by, light-heeled and merry,
Rosy with the fireshine, fragrant with the bark,
Till the clock's raised hands told me not to tarry,
Then a lengthened kiss and away into the dark.
Fires flickered out and spicy odors perished;
Long in remembrance have both been stored.
Long she has strolled — a fancy I have cherished —
Through birch woods in the Garden of the Lord.
Sitting by a birch fire when the flame has dwindled,
Dim across the hearth is a face that I know.
Fires long dead and others never kindled
Mix ghostly glimmers with a birch fire's glow.

Badger Clark

THE KILL

A shot — a shock — a wounded buck
Leaps lamely to the thicket and is gone.
Blood on the snow — the hunter thanks his luck
And follows, swiftly drawn
Along the piteous, wavering track
By those red splashes. Soon the deer,
Each step an agony, halts to look back
And then the keener agony of fear
Drives him on, staggering through the snow,
Eyes glazed with pain, proud antlered head hung low
And dry tongue lolling, till he drops and dies,
The happy hunter's prize.

Still through man's labyrinthine soul will run
This joy in giving pain,
Crude, cruel, vain —
Not brutal; no, brutes never kill for fun!
But strange,
With all the noble range
Of satisfactions open to him, he
Thus feeds his vanity.
He brings a hundred arts to flower
Yet clings to this small, savage thrill,
This short cut to a sense of power,
The cheap red triumph of the kill.

Badger Clark

BLACKOUT

I've seen the sky turned upside down.
I've known that men did that.
When fog filled the valley from ocean to town,
And darkness was blue as a velvet gown,
God's stars up above were greatly outshone
As I sat on the mountain thinking alone;
And I marveled that men had done that.

Above and below had no boundary line.
They blended and fused into one.
Venus and Mars were distantly fine,
But dimmed by that glittering city of mine.
Red lights and blue, green lights and white
Challenged the stars above them that night,
When above and below were just one.

Mighty machines drove by overhead.
I knew that men had done that.
The lights flickered out, left darkness instead.
The sky below me was suddenly dead.
Drawing over my city a curtain of fright,
They put out the jewels that studded the night,
And I cried because men had done that.

A comforting whisper came to my ear,
"They can't black out the stars."
His arm slipped around, holding me near;
He said, "Don't cry, but listen, my dear, —
Man can take joys and fill us with fright;
He can snatch the brightness out of the night;
But only God can black out the stars."

Mavis Wilson Collins

SONG OF THE PRAIRIE LANDS

I love you, South Dakota,
For your wide and vast terrain,
For your sunsets' trailing glory,
And your fields of rippling grain,
For the beauty of the sunrise
In the winter's early dawn,
When rose flames up to meet pale blue,
As night's dark veil is drawn.

I love you for your winds that bear
The kiss of early spring,
The miracle of tender green
That touches everything,
For the meadow-larks that singing fly
From nests in prairie grass,
And crocus flowers that lift blue eyes
To watch bright April pass.

I love you when the Autumn,
Like a gypsy, walks the land,
When all the fields are waving seas
Of gold, on every hand,
When slowly in the velvet night
The harvest moon lifts high,
And all the land in silver dreams
Beneath the star-strewn sky.

I love you for long twilights
Falling like soft purple haze,
For the beauty of your snow-falls,
And your bracing winter days.
I love you, South Dakota.
Only they can know your worth,
Who watched you conquer years of drought,
And saw your great re-birth.

Carrie M. Crofoot

I WILL REMEMBER

I will remember, when the spring returns
And earth's long frozen winter sleep is done,
When rivers break their icy bonds, and spill
Their liquid silver sparkling in the sun,
When grass turns tender green, and over-night
The trees are misty etchings on the sky,
When from the prairie grass, the meadow-larks
Lift up their rippling notes and singing fly;
I will remember, when spring comes again,
My heart was singing, and I loved you then.

When summer days are gold and perfume from
A thousand flowers hangs heavy on the breeze,
When twilight pins her purple veil with stars,
And the slim moon, above the cypress trees,
Rides like a goddess proudly through the sky,
Spilling her white enchantment once again, —
That was the time we loved each other best
Perhaps, and yet, perhaps it was not then —
I will remember, when I think of You,
That Love was beautiful and warm and true.

Can autumn pass across the singing fields
And leave no thought of things that we have lost;
Summer, forgotten, drop her lovely gown,
And warm hearts know the chill of coming frost?
Snow and the biting winds are now without, —
Inside, the hearth-fire and the candles' glow;
I sit alone beside the dying fire,
And steel my heart, that wept to see you go.
I will remember how I loved you, Dear,
Though my lips smile, and eyes let fall no tear.

Carrie M. Crofoot

CHRISTMAS GIFT

God gave to me a Christmas gift, —
Another lovely year,
To watch the seasons come and go,
To see each day appear
Like some bright jewel lifted from
The casket of the night,
The hours like precious, gleaming pearls,
To wear for my delight.

Once more the Christmas morn has come,
The world lies hushed and still.
It seems to hold its breath in awe
As dawn gilds plain and hill.
I lift my eyes to this new day
I never thought to see,
And whisper: "God, I thank You for
This year You gave to me."

We take our gifts of worldly things
From friends, each Christmas Day;
We thank them for their kindly thought,
And "Merry Christmas" say;
But for the greatest gift of all, —
The gift of precious days —
How often do we even pause
For words of thanks or praise?

And yet all other gifts to us
Would be of little worth,
Without these golden days of Life
Upon God's lovely earth.

Carrie M. Crofoot

VALLEY OF STARS

Last night in dreams I walked again
Along a lovely way,
A little street that lost itself
Where hills knelt down to pray.
Heavy the air with scent of rose
And orange trees in bloom,
While in the lake the mirrored stars
Lay winking at the moon.

The sky was like a sapphire bowl
Turned down upon the land,
Encrusted thick with silver stars;
The hills, on either hand,
Were twinkling stars of golden light
From houses hidden away,
That lit their fairy stars by night
And vanished with the day.

Along the street, tall locust trees
Spread fans of airy white,
And in the grass the crickets chirped
All through the soft spring night.
As overhead the white clouds trailed
Long veils of floating mist,
The breeze that brushed against my cheek,
Somewhere the sea had kissed.

O little Valley of the Stars,
Of you I often dream,
For there is sheltered in your arms
A house where candles gleam.
Guard those I love who dwell within,
Bring them sweet peace and rest,
And happiness among your hills,
By sun and wind caressed.

Carrie M. Crofoot

WHITE LILACS

To-night I smelled white lilacs wet with rain —
And suddenly I seemed to feel you near,
As though you had not ever gone away
And life still held the things that made it dear.

I closed my eyes and I could see your face
Bent low above the dripping lilac blooms,
Your slim hands cupped about their heavy heads,
The garden drenched in silver of the moon.

Bright rain-drops like a mist lay on your gown,
The air was sweet after the passing shower,
You broke the young green lilac stem in two
And handed me the fragile, fragrant flower.

“This is for you,” you said, “my Dearest One,
Because I love you so. No matter where
I am, I will come back to you again
When rain-washed lilac scent is on the air.”

And so you do! Somewhere beyond the stars,
When spring comes in those gardens far away,
You spread your wings and turn again to earth
To meet me where white plumes of lilacs sway.

BLUE DUSK

A little while ago, one soft spring night,
We climbed this hill road, looking for a star;
Blue dusk had dropped its mantle on the trees.
Hand clasped in hand, it did not seem so far.

The wind across the valley was so sweet,
The crescent moon, a lantern on the sea,
And all the world was made, for just one night,
Of that first star, and Love, and you and me.

Carrie M. Crofoot

FRIENDSHIP

I opened my door to a crowd without,
I lighted my lamp and the crowd withdrew.
They looked in idly and turned about —
 But one came in —
 And that was you!

My door is small and my room is low,
And my lamp is dim and flickering too, —
But more is here than a crowd could know,
 For one came in —
 And that was you.

WHITE WINGS

White wings that sweep across a dimming sky,
Lead-gray and heavy-burdened, skimming by
On pinions strong and high
That beat the screaming wind, —
 They fly.

Alert, on lashed and harried winds that rant
And lift above their wild, primordial chant
Of challenge and recant
Across the cowering trees.
 They slant

From rocky mountain crag to ocean breast,
From dizzy journeys, high-flung, sky-caressed,
Into a clustering nest
Of fellow clouds — white wings
 At rest.

Rita Crom

ONE ROBIN

Gray sky above, —
And red breast dully glowing,
A rain-drenched robin drips
Upon a bough
 Unleafed.

Huge drops hang
Quivering, flashing molten silver,
And rain streaks through the light
 Mist-sheathed.

The robin fills
His throat against the mist
That rises, blurred, above his
 Silvered wing,

And gray mist
Is articulate with cheer,
And rain and silver and
One robin's song
 Are spring.

VESPER

The birds swerve by
 On muted wings,
Low-flying, while the dulling sky
Drips to the west its draining light
 And flings
Day's garish banner down.
And adoration fills the shadowed air,
 And clings
To muffle all the clanging sounds of light
 And hear
The requiem the hushed pine sings
 When light is dim.

Rita Crom

SUN DOWN

Bright is the sunset glow.
Darkness looms in the east:
Darkness for man and beast
Whelming us all below.

Into the dark I ride,
Tilting at shadow and shade,
Tilting at darkness of night,
Tilting at fear afraid.

If I would cling to day,
Run after the setting sun —
— Not thus is victory won —
I could not make it stay.

I should be left behind,
By the sun I sought forsaken,
By the dark I feared overtaken,
Only at last to find

That when the dawn rolled round
After a night prolonged,
Behind me rose the light,
Before my bleared sight
My shadow, on the ground!

East with the earth I ride
Leaving the light behind,
Facing the future blind,
Knowing, whate'er betide,

I shall win through at last
Into the sun.

Dorothy E. Curtis

THE ORIENTAL WAY

The Oriental Way
'Tis courtesy to say,
"How old are you?"

There, Youth must youth confess
With shame and humbleness:
"My years are few."

And wait for that proud day
That lifts the head to say,
"I have the honor to have fifty years."

Thereafter, every year
Brings added cheer
And pride.

For years are jewels hung
Upon the life-thread, wrung
In triumph from the Scyther.

And years are Memories:
Rich moments unforget
Year after year hath wrought.

And years are Beauty; more
Out of Earth's endless store,
Breathtaking ecstasies

Of bloom and bird and star,
Cascades, high mountains far,
Lake, forest, sky, and sea.

And years are Friendships proved
(Not hoped) and Love beloved,
Not one or two nor few.

And years are Wisdom earned
By much experience, learned
From Grief and Pain and Laughter.

The young have need of youth,
So little else in truth
Have they.

But mellowed rich and full
Is the matured soul,
With color, breadth and depth.

Then proudly may you say
The oriental way:
"I have the honor to have fifty years."

THE FLOWERING OF THE HAWTHORNE

Have you seen an ocean comber
Breaking slow?
Seen the bubbles turning under,
Watched it grow
From deep blue to green, to turquoise,
Then to snow,
As the foam breaks forth with thunder?
So and so
Doth the hawthorne blow.

On the green waves of the thickly
Foliaged tree
Comes a hint of cream, like bubbles
In the sea
Deep submerged; which slowly lightens
Till it be
Burst to blossom white as spumedrift
Flying free,
Cresting all the tree.

Dorothy E. Curtis

BLUE ENGINES

I found it one day in a toy-shop rack
Such a new and wonderful thing,
A little tin engine that ran on a track,
Its motor a woundup spring.

I counted my pennies — they were too few —
So I held it in parting embrace,
But that engine of blue — all shiny and new,
Is still in my Treasured Place.

I dreamed of it through the long days somehow
And oft went to bed in sad tears —
And though I might have a score of them now
The longing has fled with the years.

Yes, something has changed since I was a lad;
For today — with the self-same toy
My heart knew no thrill — but it grew a bit sad
For I know — I'm no longer — a boy.

A STAR

Such countless things for me to do,
So much that I must give,
And fleeting years are all too few
With just one life to live.

Yet I dare hope and needs must pray
That I may gain the might
To do one thing within my day
With Him, the Infinite.

And if my faith knows no eclipse
The way may yet unbar;
Tonight with trembling fingertips
I reached — and touched — a star.

Ralph E. Denison

HOPE

Etched against the flaming colors
Of a sunset sky,
It stood alone —
The only living thing the eye could see
Across the miles of sun-parched land.
Against the wind, it's branches strong,
This tree,
Fed by an unseen stream,
Deep rooted.
Symbol of survival in the life of man,
Deep-grounded in the well of hope,
The only well of sure supply in days
Of drought upon the prairie.

TAXES

Today I paid my taxes,
And, waiting there before the bars
To have the books marked "paid",
Looked up and discovered, high
Above our heads,
A loft
Filled with old red-backed ledgers
Each
In a little pigeon hole.
And I thought
Of all the days of labor,
Pounds of butter, pork and beef
And wheat and hay
And dreams
And children's empty savings' banks
And logs
And hides and fur
That between those ancient covers
Were.

Mrs. Charles Doolittle

TO A FLY

On the south window is spring's first fly
And I am remembering again those days gone by —
When I, a child, a nap must take,
And a big green fly would a buzzing make,
That to my ears was a slumber song
Of sunny hours when days were long,
Of waking and sleeping without care
With father and mother and brothers there
In the low white house on Dakota's plain.
I feel the wind in my hair again
As astride a wild mustang I race
Across the fields to the watering place.
Thunderheads in the west I see.
As the rain pours down, I watch with glee;
When the storm is over, many a toad
Is hopping along in the muddy road.
A meadow lark sings in the new-mown hay,
As I ride the rake in a bonnet gay.
And the grandest feast I ever had
Came after helping Dad
Gather an extra heavy yield
If Irish spuds from a wind-break field.
A potato baked in it's own brown skin,
With plenty of butter, is food akin
To nothing I've tasted since that day
Of youth and laughter and joyous play.
Many a year now lies between
A matron and this childhood scene,
But ever, anon, as the seasons pass by,
Memories come in the spring on the wings of a fly.

Mrs. Charles Doolittle

SPRING RHAPSODY

Over the prairie a whisper is stealing,
Stirringly subtle and thrillingly sweet,
Waking all nature from slumber and dreaming,
Calling the world from despair and defeat.

Calling all life to arise in full beauty,
Turn from the darkness of death and decay
Into the sunlight of hope and of promise,
Into the glory of flowering May.

Up from my heart now, an ecstasy rises,
Rapture that sings of delights soon to be,
And, as this magic transforms all creation,
I lift my voice in this spring rhapsody.

BLACK HILLS NIGHT

A planet, luminous, hung high
Between two stately, fragrant pines,
Black-etched in flawless, pure design,
Against a star-strewn, summer sky.

A planet shedding radiant light
Upon a mountain world of peace,
Where Iron Creek laughs in glad release
And, eager, ripples gaily by,
Chanting a haunting lullaby.

A planet proudly floating far
Above our cabin built of logs,
The ghostly shapes of sleeping dogs,
The stir of chipmunks, call of birds,
The breath of trees — night's hidden words.

And as this matchless jewel shines
Upon me through the towering pines,
I wonder if upon its height
Some watching soul is thrilled to see
Earth's splendour gleaming radiantly
Against the bosom of the night.

Marjorie M. Drewry

FIRST SNOW

Snowflakes drifting slowly down,
Gently, lightly floating down:
Stars and pendants, jewels for kings,
Diamonds shaped for lovers' rings.

Veils of snowflakes, crystal flowers,
Frozen music, rice in showers,
Happy laughter, parting tears,
Joys and hopes of speeding years;
Dearest dreams and memories
Falling on the naked trees.

Falling thick, a wooly down,
On the houses and the town;
Tucking in the flower beds,
Blotting out the autumn reds,
Changing all the world to white,
Ghostly shapes of weird delight.

Gay flakes dancing to a tune
Piped by pipers on the moon,
Playing high and playing low,
Setting human hearts aglow
As the snow comes tumbling down,—
Twirling, whirling, swirling down.

Marjorie M. Drewry

Augustana College

SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

*Augustana, we sing out thy praises,
Our hearts overflowing with love,
As thy banner we bear, we willingly share
That love which was given from above.
We cherish thy aims and traditions,
To thee we will ever be true.
As we march on through life,
We'll let love overcome strife,
Thanking God, Augustana, for thee.*

Words and Music by R. SVANOE





General Beadle State Teachers College
MADISON, SOUTH DAKOTA

WILLIAM H. H. BEADLE

*Man of vision; man of mission; patriot, soldier, scholar, seer;
Man of action; man of purpose; duty-led in thy career.
Forward looking; self forgetting; unwaged drudge for learning's gain.
South Dakotans reap thy planting—gladly, too their plaudits rain.*

—DOANE ROBINSON.

DUST MAY BECOME A SONG

Earth may become
A bowl of milk;
Tissue of leaves
Become fine silk;
A common weed
Beneath the snows
May waken as
A crimson rose;
The fragile wings
Of honey-bees
Are busy with
God's mysteries.

This flesh, this bone in metal sealed
Would be a talent unrevealed.
O let my dust mix with good earth
And at God's smile create new birth.
I would not lie in silent grace
But meet my Maker face to face
As energy in clang of gong,
In whirl of wheels or burst of song;
Or in the quiet and the dark
Only a fire-fly's tiny spark.
Through the aeons I would be
Untiring in His ministry, —
A messenger through alchemy.

Transmuted thus
Through nature's maze
From earth to fruit
From power to praise,
Some day, amidst
A feathered throng,
Dust may at last
Become a song.

Pasque Petals Grand Prize 1940
The North American Book of Verse
Who's Who in Poetry 1945
South Dakota Club Woman

Lillian M. Edmison

THE HIGH BIRD CALLS

There are no shadows cast today
The sky is soft with thinnest gray.

No sigh, no tears disturb the scene
Blue is not blue, green not just green

For trees, the open spaces and the stream
Are veiled with opalescent gleam.

No stir of life
along the reedy banks,
no hunter's gun to vex the air;
only from winging speck
far in the sky
a lone lark trills its heavenly call —
accent for utter quietude.

And on my path no shadows play,
My skies translucent, opal-gray;

God gives me now and then a rest
From red and gold and savage zest; —

A day of utter heart release
Drowsy sweet with breathless peace;

Lest I succumb
to languid ease
that tireless bird
in the far sky
calls faint yet clear —
insistent in its challenge.
What is my answer?
The high bird calls!

Lillian M. Edmison

SOUTH DAKOTA SUNSET

A woman stood in a cottage door
And a traveller passed her way.
He was weary and dusty and tired of it all
But he stopped and she asked him to stay.

“Why do you choose this place to live;
This dusty, desolate spot,
Where the sun beats down relentlessly
And the breeze, when it blows, is so hot?”

The woman spoke and her voice was clear;
And her eyes looked far away;
“Have you seen it when it’s white with snow
On a crisp, bright winter day?

“Or when the trees are full of buds
Or the autumn leaves are falling?
These things we South Dakotans love,
For we hear our dear land calling.”

Then she turned her head toward the west
Where a sunset swept the sky;
As the traveller looked at the glorious sight
He no longer wondered, “Why?”

I SEE

Dandelions are golden stars
Shining bravely in the shadows;
They are bits of laughter
Sliding down moonbeams to my feet;
They are spots of yellow beauty,
Dotting the world’s broad lawn;
But people like me
Are blind to practical things.

Audree Ellerman

WHAT AMERICA MEANS

America means fields of growing grain,
And droves of sheep and cattle on the plain;
A quick response, when neighbors are in need,
With sympathetic heart and kindly deed.
It means a workman giving of his best,
His inward joy when reaching home and rest.
America means food and rest from strife
To immigrants who come to find new life;
The privilege to earn, to spend, or give,
To own a bit of land on which to live.
It means a home, in town or countryside,
Where free men may in unity abide.
To boys "out there," though they may live or die,
It means ice cream and chewing gum and pie,
Young waiting mothers kissing baby's feet,
And happy children playing in the street;
And Junior whistling to his dog at play,
While bringing home the cows at close of day.
It means a care-free, school girl's happy smiles,
As unafraid she walks the country miles.
To Mom and Dad, who work and pray for boys
In camp or battle front, it means the joys
Of births and hopes and glad thanksgiving days,
All merged into a symphony of praise.

DEFENCE

That look
On every face,
As if the flag were hung
Full staff, in front of every home
In town!

Averil Huck Ellis

ESCAPE

When disillusioned, weary, asking, "Why?"
The stars say, "Peace and Service," in reply.
Intolerant of man, my mind a haze —
The winds of night sing out exultant praise.
When low in spirit, burdened with my ills;
For strength I seek the everlasting hills.
Almost engulfed, and friends my Faith decry —
The promised rainbow spans the eastern sky.
I knelt in prayer, then Wisdom lifted me
And from the sepulchre of self set free.

JUST FRIENDLINESS

God grant that I may be, to passers by,
As cooling shade of rocks in desert land;
Encouragement that heartens those who sigh,
The light for those who seek a guiding hand.

REVIVAL

Because injustice comes, men's hearts are left
Depressed. Like winter's sterile days, the years
Drag by, ambition dies, and souls, bereft
Of joy and confidence, are filled with fears.
Though hope seems dead, life still goes on apace.
As covered embers dormant on the grate
Need air to live, so stricken ones need grace
And faith revived to meet an adverse fate.
Dull winter days must pass, they always do,
And hopes for restoration come with spring,
But love alone awakens — makes anew —
Inspiring desolated hearts to sing
The joyous Glory Song of life's rebirth,
As faith returns to wounded ones of earth.

Averil Huck Ellis

VIA VITA

From the abyss some bit of matter marches,
With feeble stride, irresolute resistance,
Up the steep night, across its frozen arches
Into the intimate regions of existence.

Pauses, feels a new impulse, marches again —
Travail and strain and palpitating strife
Between the animate and the dead, and then —
Sloughs off the deep and settles into life.

Soul stirs where dust was dumb,
Springs from the sleeping sod.
Something of earth become —
Something of God.

All of the cosmos, bending to His plans,
Slips into time, and all its acts are aisled.
Part of the cosmos, passing through His hands,
Becomes a child.

THE PLAN

Our every sigh and tear
Upon the breast of destiny has been arranged.
A week ago, my dear,
You were so near.
And now three times your flowers have been changed.

Time's life is infinite, and measures man's
In ways no man could hope to comprehend.
And we whose ends it spans
Make endless plans
Within the very shadow of the end.

Our every passing thought
Within the arc of His mentation He would save.

A week ago our plans were fraught
With hopes which destiny had not yet caught
And now the flowers wilt upon your grave.

Nothing I can do will change the face
Of the dim page whose least faint words I scan,
No line delete, no single word erase,
Yet I *can* trace
Over His words my pretty confirmation of His plan.

PURSUIT

I left the shroud, a path I took unseen,
I kept the vow,
And wandered through the centuries between
Last night and now.

I know you live again, it *must* be true!
Yet where's the goal?
I am a body fleeing after you —
And you a soul.

The dull tomorrows sneer at my approach,
And on my ears
Their base predictions even now encroach
Like horrid jeers.

“No matter how impetuous the rush,
How vast the heat,
Time cools the brow, time pales the grief-born blush,
Time slows the feet.”

I hear the sneer, yet scorn with fervent breath
The threat thereof;
I know the last word will be said by neither time nor death,
But by my love.

Mark Erwald

JUST THINKING

A thought is such a transient thing,
Yet thoughts go on forever;
I think of things that I would write,
Of singing rain and weather;

Of things once loved which now are gone
Where no one follows after;
But things that last are in my heart,
A voice, a song, and laughter.

I think of one whom once I knew,
Who pledged his love sincerely,
Then sailed away to join the fleet —
I think I love him dearly.

THE REQUISITE

A chance to start and grow apace,
A faith in God and love's embrace,
A work to do with time for play,
A friend or two along the way,
Some joys, some griefs, some ease, some strife —
Are all a man may ask in life.

TRUSTWORTHY

My friend
Is always there,
Like wave lengths of the air —
Though I have not tuned in
with him —
I may.

EVENTIDE

To home and rest the farmer
turns,
When clouds with gold are
rent;
And down along the river,
night
Has pitched her misty tent.

Averil Huck Ellis

CURTAIN CALL

Summer's been magnificent,
Green and lavish past belief,
Pageantry of food and flowers
Through a season all too brief.

Though we'd praise the company,
Timid players left too soon.
Only one, who loves applause,
Finds the moment opportune.

Gracious in her golden gown,
Cottonwood is standing tall,
Bows her lovely golden head,
Proudly takes the curtain call.

EVANESCENT

In quiet air have you not seen a thin
White shaft of fragrant autumn smoke arise,
When surfeited with leaves the fire dies,
And there remains a hidden glow within?
You kindle in my heart as warm a glow,
And in excess of joy my grateful love,
As incense through the vaulted calm above,
Goes softly up, and you not here to know.

No profit have you in so tenuous
An emanation, but with so much lost,
You may desire this token that assures.
And I can only try to tell you thus,
That you may cherish, if you will, this ghost,
This fleeting glimpse of what is rightly yours.

Helen Rivolo Faucett

AMERICA, FREEDOM CALLS

America, the vanguard, lead, and follow Freedom's call
For peace and brotherhood of men and government by all.
Yes, Freedom pleads with burdened men to banish war and
greed;
Their sovereign will expressed in law, they can and shall succeed.

When monarchs ruled, in ages past, their power was absolute;
Then men endured oppression's load, denied their rights and
mute,
Till Freedom sent a ray of light — the truth to set men free,
And daring souls gave self-rule birth to shape man's destiny.

To self-control and honest toil, with health to bless each man,
May wisdom add her treasures, too, and guide us in our plan,
Through justice, truth and righteousness, to build the world
anew,
With high ideals and noble thoughts the minds of men imbue.

God, feed the flame of Freedom's torch, give her our eagle's
wings
To bear her to a waiting world whose voice in answer sings:
"We thank Thee, Lord, for Freedom's light, for her redeeming
plea;
With grateful hearts we dedicate our lives to her and Thee.

Dora Ferguson

ROSES AT HEDTKE'S PASS

Oceans of roses and *mountains* of bloom;
Fragrance as high as the sky;
Bushes so loaded with bud and with bloom,
The yellow birds barely get nigh.

Woodroses scarlet, and woodroses red, . . .
Delicate pink and snow-white.
Creation is staging a show of its own
And proving the strength of its might.

Nature, the gardener, pruned them with drought
And ordered a season of rest.
He gave them a mulch from over the seas,
And bedded them down to be blessed.

Oh, who dare dispute the Creator's strange ways,
Or question His wisdom — His will?
May we learn as we live, this lesson, my dear,
To patiently wait and *be still*.

OLD FORT SISSETON

I like to stand on The Parade
in old Fort Sisseton,
to think and wonder.
I cannot reminisce,
for no memories of mine
date back to History.
The stone wall ruins speak
of ancient lore and old romance;
of redskin scouts and *Gayety*
leaving a trail
of broken hearts.

R. Alice Fiksdal

SARA IS DEAD

"Sara is dead!"

Doesn't mean much to some:
Just a wrinkled old squaw,
Toothless and dumb. . . .
Shiftless as ever one saw.

"Sara is dead!"

"Oh, no! Is it true?
Isn't she ever going to come
Smiling . . . now . . . as she used to do?"

The children wept in their childish way,
And I didn't chide them or seek to stay
Their impulsive tears or bid them cease
To grieve for the old squaw now at peace.

Tattered and bent and old
Touseled and weak and gray
Chanting the songs of old
Shuffling upon her way
Brown as a withered leaf
Wrinkled as rippled sea
Dancing a step or two
Sara — Teeopto-wi!

"Tai, ai, Ai, ai! Tai, ai, AI, ai!"

Slapping her heavy thigh
Tapping the leafy earth
Chanting a grand-child's birth

Weird was the tone of thee;
Haunting thy melody;
Strange thy nativity:
Sara — Teeopto-wi!

R. Alice Fiksdal

THE WEAVER OF DREAMS

High on the mountain of fancy,
Where the pinions of were-eagles soar,
Where the shifting cloud castles crumble,
Lives the giver of troubled sleep.

And he sits at a twisted window,
By a loom contorted and grue,
Where he weaves out the night's disproportions,
Gray ghosts that will trouble your sleep.

I would I could win to this Marlin of dreams,
Through the clouds that are tinted with pain,
To the shadowy forms he is plaiting
To be draped round your couch as you sleep.

I would straighten the warp of his weaving,
I would rend out the colors of pain,
I would weave, then, in moonlight and silver
The twill of your dreams as you sleep.

I LIVED AT HOME

Yes, I recall when I was but a lad
I brought my childish troubles home to Dad;
It seemed, somehow, that he would always know
A cure for all the ills that plagued me so.
When Mother soothed away my boyish fears
I did not know her eyes were filled with tears
For grown-up woes she kept concealed within
A smile. She taught me weeping was a sin.
I lived at home. A simple thing you say
To live where God intended you to stay;
But homes are never simple and the part
They play in building up a nation's heart
Is one that nothing else can do as well —
When fathers listen while their children tell
Of joys and griefs and mothers smile despite
The cares that day has left for sleepless night.

Gale Finley

THE MYSTIC

Although the man seemed old, — his hair was white,
His clothes antique in cut, — he spoke the truth
As one who has a virile, active sight.

“I felt so very aged in my youth,
So avid to portray conformity,
So weighed and bound by thoughts I deemed uncouth;

“Sole scale assessing their enormity
Was rigid precept from an austere race
Who visioned life some dull deformity,

“Some whipping room, enforced teaching place!
But pity them! The formulas they swore
Protected them from what they feared to face, —

“The self is not as those who go before;
It knows its own full richness and much more.”

AMO

Why do I love you? None can say
Why gentians bloom or bluebirds sing,
Why moonlight is a thrilling thing,
Why form appears from formless clay.

Can I go from you? Change the course
The circling earth holds as its trail,
Or charge the sweeping tide to fail,
Or hold the bee from honey's source!

How know I love you? What thing tells
The fragile bud to spill its wealth,
The ill one to desire his health,
The song burst forth when music swells?

What proves it love that glows in me?
I *feel* the things I used to *see*.

Alice Frad

LULLABY FOR AN INDIAN BABY

A prairie night is rife with sound,
The ground owl rises from the ground,
The ardent coyote calls his mate
To hunt with him now night is late.

*So sleep little baby, you must not tire,
Warm are the coals of the glowing, red fire.*

The Indian hunts his food by day,
The night folk hunt while arrows stay;
A bold old bear may wander near
But quickly runs, for he has fear.

Ah, how the black night spreads like a blanket!
Ah, how the west wind's movements abound!
*Sleep tiny baby! Love every sound!
All that they mean is life all around.*

A prairie night is full of peace
The active wild ones find release,
The ardent coyote seeks his lair
When white dawn chills the morning air.

*So sleep tiny baby, sleep precious one!
Mother will call you to see the sun.*

REFLECTION

A diamond's glister means to me
More than tawdry wealth!
Exuberant color, light set free,
A diamond's glister means to me
Eternal spontaneity,
Joy's abounding health, —
A diamond's glister means to me
More than tawdry wealth!

Alice Frad

THE EXILES

They were as babes in a vast pleasure-place,
Like children making happy holiday
With shells and pebbles, mindful of what grace
The passing hours might bring. So idled they.

There was a tree with gleaming fruit upon
Its lofty branches, mystic, magical.
And ever and again their eyes were drawn
To its bright beauty, though they knew full well

The doom that hung about it. So they took
And tasted; but the taste was strange, wherefore
Each one into the other's eyes did look,
And coveted the bitter fruit no more.

Then came the angel with the flaming sword,
Cleaving with one swift blow their unstirred past
From their stark future. Thundering spoke the Lord,
"Get hence, for ye are alien and outcast."

And suddenly on all the land was night,
Chilling and darkening to the inmost core.
For in this world of strange and savage blight
What woes, what unguessed perils lay in store?

So piteously they went, the youthful twain,
Out of the country of their innocence.
And if the sharp maturity of pain
Brought giant courage or grim competence,

We only know that in those prints have walked
An endless moving multitude of men,
By conscience hounded or by justice stalked
Into a thorny wilderness, as then.

Mabel Frederick



Black Hills Teachers College

SPEARFISH, SOUTH DAKOTA

*We honor you, B.H.T.C.,
Our Alma Mater, true;
May we your sons and daughters be
Ordained to serve with you.
Your faith, as firm as the pine-clad hills,
Endures and rises anew.
In lasting friendship reverence fills
Our hearts with love for you.*

E. L. McCALLUM



Dakota Wesleyan University

MITCHELL, SOUTH DAKOTA

*Show me the Scotchman
Who doesn't love the thistle;
Show me the Englishman
Who doesn't love the rose;
Show me the true-hearted son of old Wesleyan
Who doesn't love the spot where the Tumble-
weed grows.*

THE FIR TREE LIVES

Dear Fir, your lovely branches are radiant tonight
With lights and silver tinsel — you are a joyous sight!
Your beauty in the garden brings peace and love; for lo,
The carolers come singing around you in the snow!
They sing of little Jesus and how a bright star shone
To guide the Wisemen journeying to the manger-throne;
How shepherds saw the angel who bade them hasten on
To find this Holy Infant, the Virgin Mary's Son!
The King of Kings lay sleeping and all the earth was stilled;
The miracle of Jesus — the prophesy fulfilled!

In ecstasy you waited to greet the trees at morn;
You live — and now can tell them of Christ the Saviour born!
The winter winds keep singing and forests far away
Re-echo this song-story that you have told today.
Dear Fir Tree of the aeons, long may you live to be
The Evergreen of Christmas and Immortality!

— *Jean Drew Freeman*

LEAVES MAY WITHER

Bright spots of color flutter down
With but a gentle rustling sound,
They make a lovely, tinted rug
Upon the silent, frozen ground.

They know their time has come to leave
The vines and branches overhead,
And, falling swiftly, they depart
To join their comrades who are dead.

Who looks beyond the autumn hour
Retains a calm, unruffled poise,
Because a waiting miracle
Is one of future's hidden joys.

THE ROCK-A-BYE CHAIR

The rock-a-bye chair is a nice little chair
And used by mammas everywhere.
They use it when the baby cries;
It measures time for lullabies.
The rock-a-bye chair goes squeak! squeak! squeak!
To put little babies fast asleep
Fast asleep . . . fast asleep.

The rock-a-bye chair is a nice little chair;
For mammas tell sweet stories there,
And here the evening prayer is said,
Before the children go to bed.
The rock-a-bye chair goes squeak! squeak! squeak!
To put little babies fast asleep,
Fast asleep . . . fast asleep.

— *Amanda Friesen*

ARMISTICE DAY 1938

Dear Land of Mine, I love you. Not as man by woman
is loved, for such love oft times
is doomed to die; but as a child
by its mother is loved, a child
in whom is centered the very core
of her being.

Dear Land of Mine, I love you. Not alone for the
shelter of your magnificent
wings do I love you, but for
the safety of your stars and
stripes that bind together the
peoples of all nations as one
being.

Dear Land of Mine, I love you. Not only for your
gestures of grace and compassion
do I love you, but for every
noble impulse defending the right
of man as intended by the Supreme
Being.

Dear Land of Mine, I love you. Not for royal pomp
or glory do I love you, for the
only Kingdom I revere is the King-
dom of Heaven; but for your strength
of independence do I love you, and
for your perseverance, which, by the
grace of God, may be sanctioned
through all the years of your end-
less life, that you may dwell in
His love, and forever in the hearts
of your beings.

Rebecca Fusfeld

ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE

Steeped in loveliness
The Old Testament flowers
Luxuriantly.
Let your fragrance penetrate
The baneful, O my people!

THE JEW

Light as thistledown
His jests float, defensively;
His dark eyes hold tears.

SONG

When songs we love, midst volumes rare,
Come suddenly to light,
A hidden fragrance fills the air
Like petals falling soft and white
That lightly leave a tracing there
Of muted music in their flight.

HEART HUNGER

Hold still that ship on a flawless blue,
Hold still the fleecy helm,
Only another line or two
And I'll feast my soul with the sight of you.
Swiftly the needle plied to end
The line in a golden light,
But the snowy ship had sailed from sight,
And its place was draped with a graying height,
And I hungered the whole night through.

Rebecca Fusfeld

BIRDIES IN MY TREE

Little birdies in my tree,
Every morning full of glee,
Singing songs so merrily,
Who has taught you, "Do, re, mi"?

Having bathed your fluffy coats,
To the sky your music floats,
Bursting from your up-turned throats,
Who has taught you, "Do, re, mi"?

Warbling up to God and me,
Hallelujahs in my tree,
I know, I know, now I see,
Angels taught you, "Do, re, mi".

MY PANSY BED

"Peek a-boo! Peek a-boo!"
I heard wee voices speaking.
"I see you! I see you!"
I wondered who was peeking.

Quite near the ground, think what I found.
Some small, fat smiling faces.
Some were hushed, some just blushed,
From hoods with velvet laces.

A friendly wink, a friendly blink,
Each sister nudged her brother.
My pansies blue, my pansies true,
They cheered me and each other.

Wilhelmina W. Garvin

MY ROBIN

Brave Robin, hopping through my wintry yard,
And bathing where my icy fountain hums,
Where on bare twigs the whistling blizzard strums,
How can you sing when living is so hard?
The robin chirps; "I am your morning bard.
I splatter, preen, and drink, though frost benumbs.
Since worms are hid, I eat your surplus crumbs,
Adjust myself to stern things and regard
My task, the mission which to me belongs."
And so my robin comes, and trills, and sings;
But when earth seems too dull, away he flings
His upward course to sun-splashed atom throngs,
From where I know he gets his cheery songs.
The robin says to me; 'You, too, have wings.'

THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

It is not English, French, or Russian,
Not German, Spanish, Greek, Chinese;
It is the whispering tongue of beauty,
The sibilant note in waving trees,
The silent speech of awesome mountains,
Or rippling sport of leaping fountains.

The wordless pain of human sorrow,
A helpless child's uplifted hand,
The sunlit smile, or peal of laughter
Is language all can understand.
The thoughtful ear in every nation
May hear God speak without translation.

Wilhelmina W. Garvin

THE CHRIST IN THE CHURCH WINDOW

I like to come early
And sit in the pew,
No music yet started,
The worshippers few.

You look at me then with
Beneficent face,
With welcoming smile and
Your eyes full of grace.

O Christ in the window,
How faithful you stand,
Invitingly urging
With outstretching hand.

You call out the best of
My soul's deep within,
That loves what you love and
To Heaven is kin.

As now in your temple
You greet me with love,
Some day you will meet me
In mansions above.

SESTET

No matter what may come to me,
I will have peace, I will live free.
I will not let
Some petty slight annoy my heart.
Let green-eyed envy send a dart, —
I will forget.

MY MOTHER

She was not a society belle,
But she reigned supreme,
Where elusive, the home spirits dwell,
And true love smiles beam.

Wilhelmina W. Garvin

LIFE

Life, you are waning
Past all detaining,
Drifting as thistle-down sifts on the breeze;
All that is mortal
Dreads the dark portal
Waiting to open when time turns the keys.

Roses will scatter
Their oils of attar
Over the gardens where lovers will stray,
Rain from the mountains
Burbles to fountains,
I shall be gone like the mist of their spray.

Gods of the morning
Gave me no warning,
Life seemed to cover an endless domain;
Youth, with its laughter,
Dreads no hereafter,
Flees like a hare through the sun and the rain.

Life, I discover,
You are a lover,
Fickle, inconstant, and fleeting as breath,
As I grow older
You have grown colder,
Seeking divorce in the high court of death.

Still I adore you,
Bow down before you,
Though you are filching my garments away,
Beauty's lure lingers,
Love's fairy fingers
Tough me with tenderness, beg me to stay.

Jessie M. Gilmore

CLAIM SHACK

Something calls me back
To that old claim shack
Underneath a hill,
Isolated, still,
Where the prairie lies
Under turquoise skies,
Mile on purple mile,
Where the earth-gods smile.

There the cottonwoods shade
The spring-fed glade;
There the coyote calls
As the evening falls;
There the cattle walk
And the prairies talk
Of an older day;
There the earth-gods stay.

Bound by city walls
Where no wild bird calls,
Lonesome for the sky,
Earth-gods pass me by;
Something calls me back
To that old claim shack
Where the prairie lies
Under turquoise skies.

HE WHO HAS SEEN

He who has seen a dream come true,
Has looked on the face of God;
He who has loved the good he knew
Has passed where His feet have trod.

Jessie M. Gilmore

WINGED HOOFS

Prairie wind runs whistling, streaking by,
Like a whinnying stallion racing round the sky,
Silver hoofs flying through the hot sun's blaze,
With never any rest, no time to graze.

Up and down the roving cattle trails
The wind runs rampant with its blustering gales,
And palomino Polly hears the beat
Of the great gold stallion's echoing feet.

Gallop Polly, gallop through the wind and sun,
Perhaps you'll overtake him as you run,
Perhaps you'll find the pastures in the sky,
And he'll be whistling where the wind rushes by.

THE PIPES OF PAN

In prairie pastures, O you most fleet,
Have only the splendor and speed of your feet
When the new day dawns and the night retires
And fear runs with you on wind-swept lyres.

I see you stop, and look, and listen,
Where the far sage-sedges glint and glisten,
Then away you leap with speed that defies
The coyote that follows, the fear that flies.

In the flight that loses, the bullet that speeds
To the form that falls and no longer heeds,
Comes the valiant, victorious hunter . . . man
Whose ears are closed to the pipes of Pan.

We call you antelope, wild plain's deer,
And prairie goat, and some of us hear
The pipes of Pan ring faint and far
Across the waste-lands where you are.

Jessie M. Gilmore

TOMORROW IS TODAY

Where find you, peoples of the world,
Where find you yesterday —
A yesterday to come back to
Now that war has gone its way?
Though wearily you cogitate
And twist, and turn, and chafe,
Where find you place on land or sea
Where man's brood may be safe?

But yesterday we were secure;
No foe could raid our shore,
No enemy come floating down
To land beside our door,
Death in his heart and in his hands,
To menace all we own.
We've come on terror that is new,
That we have never known.

One way is open for us still,
The path is straight and clear,
The signs and portents are put up
For those who see and hear:

Someway . . . somehow . . . we must achieve
True brotherhood of man,
Friendship of homefolks for homefolks
Throughout all nations' span,
A common tongue that all men speak,
A coin that all men spend,
Freedom to worship and to live
From world's end to world's end.

For this is what we all must know:
There is no yesterday,
Grimly, we face a stormy dawn,
Tomorrow is today!

Lillian Gooby

DUST DEVILS DANCING

Dust devils dancing
Malevolently glancing,
Fat, gray, smoke-puffs peering from the hills,
Rising, spreading, merging,
Rushing forward, surging,
Out across the tortured land their wild song shrills:
Whoo-ie! Whoo-ie! Whoo-ie!
How the curtain snaps!
The sun in a dust hammock sleeps.
Oh, the blown sand ripples in a hundred thousand rills,
When the dust devils dance on the hills!

Dust devils dancing,
With the wind advancing,
Jet black heads that rise to peer before they leap
Through the late noon shimmer,
Through the heat wave's glimmer,
Till across the drouthy land their wild notes sweep:
Whoo-ie! Whoo-ie! Whoo-ie!
New hills built for old,
Even as in ages long ago;
While the blown sand ripples, ripples, ripples into rills,
As the dust devils dance on the hills.

Lillian Gooby

THE QUARRY

Now they are coming! Coming
Nearer and more near!
The hounds of Death are running,
The horns of Death are sounding clear.

Long ago on the wind came warning,
The harsh, cruel scent
Tainting the breath of the morning.
My heart's blood thickened, I went
By hidden ways, through dark trees,
To a secret lair,
And buried my head and slept.
They would not find me there.

Over the trees by the thin stream, rasping,
Dimmed by the distance, there came
The death-pack's hungry asking, —
Mine was the name.

Then I arose and plotted
An intricate pattern. It lay
With strands interwoven and cunningly knotted
To catch and betray.
But swiftly, swiftly, Death drives them;
The morning sun turns grey.
They breathe my fleet, clean running;
They have found my way.

Soon it will come — the facing
Of blood-clotted eye — the breath
Sickening hot — the red tongue dripping —
And the tusked fangs of Death.

SPRING FANCY

Above the new and virile grass
The cold spring wind is blowing, blowing.
The ruddy husks of young buds drop,
The pudgy robins run, and stop,
And run again, cock-sure with knowing
Dark ways slim angling worms will pass.
They hear the secret, unseen going,
And run with sallow feet, and stop,
And run again, cock-sure with knowing.

Dorothy Hall Graham

THE GREAT SEQUOIAS

The great Sequoias are like sacred shrines,
Their lofty boles upreaching to the light,
And, though above, the sun's full glory shines,
Between their shadowed depths a star is bright.
The seething rush of traffic wheels agleam
On highways winding, twisting far around,
Seems part of some nightmarish, troubled dream
From which one wakes to walk on holy ground.
These age-old sentinels of forest life
Impart the stillness of tranquility;
For they have grown through flood and storm and strife;
We sense their strength and know humility.
They lived when angels sang that Christ was born
And typify the Peace proclaimed that morn.

FUTILITY

This transient life is like a grand parade:
We shout in triumph over progress made,
We hug our virtues to our boasting hearts
And treasure them as life's earned accolade.

We build, create, destroy, and then rebuild,
As children, playing with their blocks are filled
With joy to show their prowess to the world,
So proud are we because our hands are skilled.

We build our homes, our schools; our church bells ring;
We write sweet songs for voices trained to sing;
We build great ships to sail the sea and air —
Then build a bomb to ruin each dear thing.

WORDS

Words are such lovely things!
We send them out on gossamer wings
And in some soul a melody sings.

Bernice Smith Hagman

AUTUMN SYMPHONY

When autumn plays upon the keys
I hear such lovely symphonies:
Crashing chords of red and yellow,
Pale green notes are accent mellow,
Bold red maples sound fortissimo,
Graceful birches pianissimo;
The harmony of sound combines
With obligato of the pines;
While drifting leaves in rustling rhyme
Play threnodies to summer-time,
Can there be notes whose accent clear
I am not privileged to hear —
Overtones whose meanings sound
A melody I have not found?

RESTLESS TIDES

Beautiful, blue ocean, a-foam on rocky shore,
Are you softly whispering some strange, exotic lore
You learned from distant islands, green jewels on your breast,
Or is your constant murmur the theme of your unrest?

Your rolling surf glints blithely in the warm, bright sun at noon,
Your surface, hammered silver in the path-way of the moon;
Mysterious tides that come and go on shifting, sandy beach
Fill my soul with vague unrest for something out of reach.

It may be unknown ports that call, where monsoons always blow,
Or coral atolls in warm seas, where moving palms bend low;
But then, perhaps, my course is set, unseen the Map or Chart,
And I must find contentment in the Tides within my heart.

Muriel M. Hargreaves

MIRACLES IN FROST

I awoke the other morning,
To find all outside laid
With crystal-coated beauty
That a cold, damp night had made.

I watched from western window
And saw a rose dawn-light
Spread softly through the setting,
Water-coloring the white.

Each tree stood cherry-blossomed,
Each bush wore June's caress;
They both cried just like babies
When the warm sun spoiled their dress.

A DRIFT BEGINS

I watch the tiny snowflakes
As they dance with childish pride
On my lawn. Such merry wonder
Sways their course from side to side,
In even rhythm. Then bewildered,
Caught in swirls of angry winds
And hurled with force, they settle
Along the drive . . . A drift begins.

Grace M. Hartley

RIVER RISING

Below, the licking tongues of river, rising,
Pass beyond the fields where yesterday
The green and spicy sweetness, rich with promise,
Flowed to high meadows where sated cattle lay.
Where the early pasque flowers bloomed like stars
Along the paths that tied the house to farm,
A brown stain shimmers where a home had been —
Twisted walls, and a chimney's lifted arm.

Where new wheat glowed, now a muddy swath
Ends a dream of bread from open hands
To every lane of earth where hunger reaches
And starving children cry in broken lands.

Their burdens more than tired men should bear,
Save these, whose northern stock is strong,
Whose fathers brought a precious gift of courage
And faith and will to try again, to pass along.
Now, ignore alike the whimpering of children
And bitter despair of soul and mind and bone;
Here weary caravans may rest, for on the morrow
They will be back, rebuilding, stone on stone.

REFLECTIONS

Trees silhouette strange patterns in my pool,
Goblins, the moon, a round-eyed owl. So, for a while,
Away from every pulse beat, I am alone in this still place.
Far down I see your lips, and lean to blur your gamin smile
With mine.

Tonight the music thunders, and its rhythm echoes —
Some stranger lifts me to my toes and bubbles rise
In my champagne glass, until one bursts and is your face.
Then a crooner's whispering becomes a paeon, and in my eyes
Stars shine.

Evelyn Lesser Harvey

HE HAS NOT KNOWN

He who speaks of the rain as a symbol of gloom,
And sunshine as an emblem of joy
Is not of the drouth belt.
He has never lived in a land that was dying,
Panting and gasping to death in the glare of the sunshine;
Nor felt on his tortured eyes the weight of the white-hot sky;
Nor beheld the green grain wither to nothing;
Nor has he heard,
When the red hopper blazed in the hell-heat,
The doom of the remnant of cornfield;
Nor has he heard in his dreams the skeleton cattle
Bawl in vain all night at a dried-up mudhole.

He has not watched with awakening hope
A cloud that was vaunting relief . . .
Only to see it vanish again in a billow and smother of dust
As if the hot earth had exploded.
He has never faced grim despair while year after year
Was blasted and scorched from a lifetime.

He has not heard in the night
That thump of rain on the drouth-warped shingles;
Listened to sloshing of water drive down from dirt-cruste'd eaves
To the sides of a hot, hissing barrel;
Watched . . . while the mouth of the earth
Gasped . . . drank . . . and returned to the living;
Listened while corn-leaves gave thanks
As rain swished over their faces.
He has never slumped around in a garden
That yesterday quivered and sweltered
Under the hot hand of death
And today is soggy with promise,
Promise that we shall eat
Without the gaunt spectre, tomorrow, hovering over the table.

Roy L. Herrick

SHEEP MOUNTAIN OF THE BADLANDS

King of weird beauty, monarch of chaos,
Worst of the Badlands and best of them all,
Brooding in silence, mystery-haunted,
Guarded by battlement, castle and wall,
Riven by canyons sheer in their yawning.
Jagged with pinnacle, tower and spire,
This is the mountain, tomb of earth's creatures
Eons more ancient than human desire.

Strata on strata Nature has laid them,
Forms of a life now millenniums gone.
Moses, Confucius — they are but infants
Matched with these relics of mammal-age dawn.
Waiting in patience through the long ages,
Keeping the record from jungle to snow,
Here are the archives built before Adam,
Hoarding the knowledge that mortals may know.

Roy L. Herrick

THE LOW ESTATE OF MEN OF HIGH DEGREE

The low estate of men of high degree
We often, but they seldom, feel and see,
Till loss of money, honor, life, they face.
Then they perceive, at last, their desperate case —
No faith, no hope, no sacrificial love;
In self they trusted, not in God above;
Nor wasted time to win and hold true friends,
And thus their high degree in nothing ends.
But if, like Francis of Assisi, they
Accept their low estate, theirs is the way
That leads through love of God and fellowman
To perfect joy because it's Heaven's plan.

PRAIRIE COLORS

God, thou hast painted the colors in greys.
Only at night and on cloud-covered days.
While, at the setting and rise of the sun,
Heaven and earth no more look like a nun,
But blossom out in the colors of queens —
Violets, purples, and red shades and greens,
Yellows and blues in their manifold tints —
Gayer than Japanese woodcolor prints.

POLITICS

I point with pride
To all my side
Has tried and done,
For every one,

And view with alarm
The terrible harm
The opposite side
Has caused when it tried.

Rudolph Hartz

FAITH

Someday, I know that I must sail away
For unknown ports, across Life's restless sea.
Yet, without fear, I view that distant shore —
That land of my eternal destiny.
When that time comes, and I have said farewell,
Weep not for me . . . I will be sailing on,
Still unafraid . . . with eager, questing soul,
Into the splendors of that final dawn.

KEEPSAKES

I often climb the narrow, winding stair,
To rummage through the attic's odd array.
Today, in an imaginative mood,
I visioned lovely scenes from Yesterday.
I pictured great-grandmother's cozy room
With these brocaded chairs beside the fire,
Her spinning wheel, the Dresden figurines,
And the painted, quaint tea-bell I so admire.

Her walnut chest, that held her lovely gowns
And priceless homespun linens edged in lace,
The dainty gloves and veil from her trousseau
Were sweetly fragrant in their resting place.
I clearly saw her as a winsome bride
Amid these well-loved treasures . . . which impart
Through all these countless hours of enchantment,
A precious, jeweled message to my heart.

Blanche M. Hinchliff

AGE

It is not the years that make us old,
Nor labor for our daily bread,
Not fortunes lost, not enemies,
Nor mourning for our loved ones dead.

The light of youth may still shine out
From eyes no longer bright;
A child-like faith sing in the heart
Of one whose hair is white.

A hundred years is not so long
If our dear ones are true;
For they alone can dim the light
And hush the singing, too.

THE EPITAPH

I came upon a quiet place one day
Where crosses covered all the grassy hill;
Beneath each cross, a boy, just out of school;
His lessons done, he lies so very still.
Our peace again was bought with priceless blood
Of men God ransomed in this self-same way.
I read through tears their simple epitaph:
"For our tomorrow, they gave their today."

NOW

If you have a flute,
Play it—
If you have a speech,
Say it—
Only death is mute.

Dagny Hinderaker

TO A CHILD

Sleep sweetly,
Baby, in your bed;
Dream bravely —
Life is just ahead.

Walk gently
Through the gates of youth;
Drink deeply
From the wells of truth.

Speak softly,
There are those who weep;
Step lightly,
There are those who sleep.

Pray daily
As our Master said.
Sleep sweetly
In your narrow bed.

LILACS

The nicest thing I know in spring
Is lilacs after rain!
Of love, and every lovely thing
They sing a glad refrain.
A thousand mystic voices sweet
From orchid throats arise,
With fragrance such as one retrieves
From dreams of Paradise.

THE "CHRISTIAN" NATIONS

Our once superior Western race
Now pagan customs favor;
How unabashed we bow to Baal —
The salt has lost its savor.

Dagny Hinderaker

EVENTIDE

Into the misted valley sinks the sun
With haunted air of twilight, strange and still;
And, far, a cloud sails, as the day is done,
Above the pines that crown each dreaming hill.
And all the land, so dim and lovely grown,
Is softly changed, in hush of afterglow,
To paradise. Gray shadows fall; wind-blown,
Tall grasses creep to ranges touched with snow.
So soon the eager fires of youth are spent,
With love's long day stayed here by drift of years,
That hold the heart, as if, each, plodding, went
His way down fevered paths of toil and tears.
But age, unsought, like night, with white stars blest,
Brings only sweet content and joy of rest.

AFTERMATH

Spring is here and again I feel
The lure of the trail that I knew
When a maid. Oh, my childhood years
May wane, like mist dissolved in blue,
Soft skies, when the gray, honking geese
Are lost in cloudlets white as fleece.
But my soul, like a shining ship,
Now bears me on to far, dear ways
Of ecstasy, like perfumed breath
Through cherry trees in warm, spring days.
Oh, there are trails a maid may take
When childhood years begin to wane —
So, I shall let my own heart revel
In memories that bring no pain.

Clara G. Holleman

CREATION

What can I give, besides the living breath,
To this, the child that stirs beneath my hand?
A simple life, where love and laughter mix,
A faith in God, devotion to our land —
These things the man I love and I can give —
A house on rock instead of shifting sand.

And what can we, his parents, hope to win
From that infinity whence new life springs?
Contented hours to spend caressingly,
New sense of worth, new joy in growing things —
All these and more — the values of the past
Linked with the future's hopes — a baby brings.

TRANQUILITY

From my window I see the moon,
Silver tonight, its soft glow
Misting the dark slate of the sky
With radiance. Shining moon,
Caught in the black branches of the trees,
Making one magic circle
Of black lace. Without the circle
The lace fades into darkness,
Quiet darkness, tender as a mother.
How could anyone be sad tonight,
Or fear, or admit of being weary?
It is a night of peace, tranquility.
The silver moon is shining in my window.

Lily Heeren Houseman

FANTASY

Shimmering spot of light on the ceiling,
Where have you come from,
Why do you dance back and forth
Like a little boy, thoroughly chilled,
Gooseflesh all over, and shivering?

I've discovered you, spot of light.
I can bend you to my will.
You're caught in the steam
That rises in wisps from my tea.
I pick up my cup and you disappear.
I put it down,
And out of a violence of motion
You settle down to a shimmering spot again.

The tea is gone, the vapor rises no longer.
You are gone, shimmering spot.
Some magic went with you;
Some fancy I played with when I found you
Caught in the steam of a tea cup.

SONG OF THE WIND

The wind is on a wild rampage; it piles the snowdrifts high;
It coaxes low and lower still the mercury. Its cry
Is weird and ghostly, strangely kind though dark and somber too.
Through day and night it comes and brings faint whisperings
of you.

The wailing wind mourns for a friend, the raging wind a foe.
I cannot bid the wind be gone — I would not have it go.
For loud its ways and harsh its voice, in accents ever new,
It comes and brings me whisperings, small messages from you.

Who made the wind your errand boy? Who gave it faith and
trust?

Who peered beneath its ragged coat of snow and hail and dust
And found therein a secret heart for sending treasures through
The night and storm, and leaving here glad whisperings of you?

Lily Heeren Houseman

RETURN

They said, "You can't go back;
The door to yesterday is closed,
And only at the peril of your dreams
Will you invade the tower where dreams reposed."

I knew my dreams were safe,
For love was keeper of the keys
And you were waiting for me there, my dear;
We opened all the magic doors with ease.

SUNRISE IN WINTER

In chaste, white loneliness above the land,
The silent hill a regal altar seems,
Piercing the veils that fold the sleeping day,
The morning star a silver taper gleams,
The heavens blush in sweet humility
As across the snow, in golden flames that spill
Their mirrored beauties, the Creator's hand
Places a glowing monstrance on the hill.

Published in Ave Marie

MY HEART DELIGHTS IN SIMPLE JOYS

A baby's sleepy kiss, the wild birds' morning song,
The fragrant meadow grasses washed with dew,
Chokecherry trees in bloom, the silent dawn
That comes before the sunrise thunders through,
The brilliant plumage of the pheasant cock,
The deer and fawn that seek the stream's cool brink
Where wild flowers nestle in the drowsy shade,
And thirsty cottonwoods bend down to drink.

New joys are found in every passing hour,
And hardly pausing in my busy day
I offer prayer of grateful work to God
For putting so much beauty in my way.

Published in the Montana Farmer

Honora Carrol Hurd

“AFTER ME COMETH A BUILDER . . .”

(For Ernest R. DeRemer 1869-1946)

Though fruit of his loins he had not been permitted
He was more than builder of houses.
Though he saw not incarnate his own children —
Still one recalls the architect's fine hand extended,
Which altered as it remodeled minds of other men's sons.
His labor changed the face of the British-titled town
As he built and rebuilt there, for a long half century.
He wrought to line its streets with sturdiness and strength.
He adopted the square and level and plumb line of the Great
Carpenter,
First as apprentice, then as journeyman,
Until eventually master workman he had become.
He used these tools as he had their finite counterpart
To size up and true the souls inhabiting
The structures that he had builded for their bodies.
He laid out his young city's streets and meant them
The highways of the Lord, for the feet of the town to tread.
With an artisan's precision, he saw planted her parks,
And stretched out her central Parkway north to south.
He saw a young church grow and expand, with Dakota,
Then shrink and stretch again, as its young men
Went and came, themselves to be elsewhere hewers of wood.
With high rectitude and balance he made over the old church
frame.
His righteousness, the hammer and chisel proved
Unto youth, as for two generations, they entered its ready
swinging door.
Builder of homes, and hewer of men, by some divine coincidence,
Where as apprentice he began, so as master craftsman he finished.
He laid down his tools reluctantly, as, with exactitude,
He sought to make over the first house within whose walls
He had wrought as a young wielder of tools,
New come out of Wisconsin. Grandsons watched where grand-
sire had stood;
Kings spoke in the old time: “After me cometh a builder.
Tell him I too have known.”

Corinne Huntington Jackson

A HOUSE ON A HILL

(*To Emma Shriner Pratt 1838-1940*)

Today she sits in her shining parlor's whiteness
Dreaming some and living much;
June will find her walking two full years upon the road
Of her second hundred years.
She roused to speak: "I didn't think much of the Bottoms
Either here, or farther east, when we came out in 1860;
I had seen the wreck of too many lives
Thrown with their homes as flotsam
On the banks of the Big Sioux and the Old Missouri.
I told them nobody could get me
To live there. Why, some of them lived, still, in their prairie
schooners.
They wanted us to stop, but I had not left Illinois
Nor my folks' Ohio State, to live thus,
In a wagon, indefinitely.

Nor did I let my husband house us in a dugout.
They fill up with snow in blizzard-time.
I wanted a house on a hill."
Eighty years in Territory and State
Have found her living as she willed.
I remembered another full of wisdom who spake:
"For it cannot be hid . . ."

Once again she pondered. "You ask my philosophy of life?
I scarcely understand.
I did not care greatly for the Bottoms . . .
I wanted a house on a hill . . ."

Corinne Huntington Jackson

HOUSE HUNTING

(To Chesley from Corinne)

The preacher seeks to comfort the bereaved: "In My Father's
house

Are many mansions."

Odd half-thoughts haunt my tortured mind:

"It takes two to go house-hunting, even in Paradise.

Romance is no more than relative. Not only the young keep
tryst."

You and I always picked out our houses together.

A year ago I begged you, conscious even then of the permanence
of Death,

"Will you wait somewhere? Somewhere beyond, on the path,
will you wait?"

Sometime I meant to catch up with you. You and I had walked
in perfect step.

It seemed we should always match each other's tread

In the gentle fashion you had set.

The "earthly house of this tabernacle" holds me bound a space.

I live on the dwelling place you made with your two strong
hands

For our abiding. Someway, I cannot see you in a house without
me.

I know you could not well take up in bachelor's quarters again.

Perhaps the Celestial Steward has rented you a small place

In which to bide. Thirty years, I grant, are not many

When one puts his mind upon Eternity.

But certainly Heaven recognizes finite Time for the newly reg-
istered,

And has made some provision for short-term leases

For the tennant who postpones decision. I am assured you have
made it clear

That we always pick our houses together.

Corinne Huntington Jackson

SECOND ADVENT

(For Suzanne Corlet on Twelfth Night, 1947)

Once again, a miniature in composite, you open a door
And look in upon the world, and do not turn your face aside.
Seven years ago you came, before.
You hesitated on the threshold then, for a short space
To reach out in promise to hungry waiting arms,
And then were gone. Your second coming has been long delayed.
I recall that black-robed sisters brought forth holy waters
And called you Mary. They wanted not that you return
As though not welcomed and received of Earth —
Doing what they could, they gave you the Name of Names for
Women.

I wonder, this time, had the Seraphim need of force?
Did they, those Winged Ones in charge of earthward bound,
Feel a gentle compulsion to turn you round to face the planet
once again?

Did, perchance, one of them, disclose for what unnumbered times
The Son of Man had looked at Earth and found it hard
And turned away in protest from a people
Who had awaited His coming for four millennia?

Once before, a miniature in composite,
You opened a door and looked in upon us
And turned your face aside.

Corinne Huntington Jackson

THIS CHRISTMAS EVE

(To Harriett)

You loved the candles shining on the snow;
You said, "So shall the Blessed Christ Child surely know
We welcome Him into our home tonight.
May all who pass remember His Star's light
And find new grace of gladness in this friendly glow!"
So I shall light the candles Christmas eve.

And I know well for you it's "Song again!"
I heard you sing, though you were mute with pain,
A song of selfless courage, faith and love,
As lifted all around you far above
The fear of death and made of loss rich gain.
I'll hear you in each carol Christmas eve.

Your hands moved with such deft and loving care
When you wrapped gifts, as though you breathed a prayer
That each should carry in it power to bless
With pleasure and the touch of friendliness,
Or ease the fear of want so many bear.
Our prayers shall go together Christmas eve.

DRIZZLE

"God has made all things lovely in their time!"
Yes, even this drizzling April day He blesses:
Not with the crystal gift of dazzling rime,
Nor with the star-eyed bloom June's joy professes;
But patient clouds stoop low above the earth;
The gentle fingers of their questing mist
Wake bud and grassroot to a greening mirth
Through spell known but to the Great Alchemist.
The flicker, purple grackle, sinuous thrasher
And scores of migrants fill the air with trills
And calls and hurrying wings. What could be rasher
Than word that showery April has no thrills?
And hark! As drops chase down each twig and wire,
"This is love's hour!" chorus the robin choir.

Adeline M. Jenney

H-U-R-O-N spells Huron,
Best school in the land;
Right behind our Alma Mater
We'll always take our stand.
We've got the "pep", "
We've got the "rep", "
And now we're here to tell,
We'll fight the fight
And do it well
And show you how to yell—
Rah! Rah! Rah!

Huron, O dear old Huron!
We're for you all the time.
We love the purple,
We love the gold,
We'll do our best for you
Rah! Rah! Rah!
Huron, O dear old Huron!
To our college we'll always be true
Just try us,
Just test us.
You'll find that you can't best us
Come on Huron, Let's go!





Mount Marty Junior College and High School, O.S.B.
YANKTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

*On a hill overlooking the old Missouri,
 On a spot nature's loveliest and best;
 Stands a school that our fond hearts will ever
 cherish,
 Our Mount Marty, the pride of the West.
 Thou art ours truly! We greet thee today,
 And we love Alma Mater so dear;
 May each loyal and true heart in times yet
 untold
 Sound the praise of the White and the Gold.*

*Mount Marty, we will take your glorious teach-
 ing
 Through the world wherever we go;
 Your spirit we'll cherish, your fame we will
 spread
 As in years our numbers will grow.
 We are thine forever! Be thou ours truly,
 For we love Alma Mater so fair.
 May God speed thee and heaven around us
 unfold
 Blessed memories of the White and the Gold.*

IN THE FIELDS *

Christmas 1938

In the fields . . . no food, no fire, no wall
Against Carpathian winds and battening Baltic mists,
For children, whimpering; for very old women, huddled
Silent; for ancient men, under prayer shawls, wailing
Ancestral psalms through frost-weighted beards.
Little ones tug at skirts that wrap them futilely,
Futilely away from hunger, cold . . . from . . . what?
Babies gasp at fevered, denying breasts;
While fathers pace, wild-eyed, helpless . . . in the fields.

How many Sabbaths since The Four at council
Shuffled us, with smirking nod and pen-stroke,
Out from ancestral halls, headlong before
The greedy tramp of men, the callous roar
Of planes and tanks that fill the air with menace
Even in the fields.

In front are hostile eyes,
Watching, pushing us back . . . into the fields.

But my boy was safe! Beautiful and strong;
The childless Gentile loved him; she had helped
Him, wee Jew firstling, not long since, to life;
Holding him close, she whispered, pleading:
He would be safe, far safer there with her;
She would cherish him, guard him as her own.

But walls have ears: men came and tore him from her;
While her husband and the neighbors, threatened,
Frightened, swore that she was childless, the child,
"Smuggled". She, dragged to torture; and my son, my son,
Thrown from a speeding car, twisted, dying . . .
Into the fields.

* * *

Weep, my Rachel! RACHEL!
Oh, she sleeps, she sleeps, cold . . . in the fields.
*News Item

PEACE

No man has seen Thy peace yet, face to face,
O Lord, our God; but we know passionate,
Glad leap of heart, because the Seamless Robe
Has stirred the darkness of our night of hate!

Adeline M. Jenney

CONFESSION

Father, how disappointed thou must be!
This life, this power, this opportunity —
All gifts thou gavest — are full adequate,
And yet not one has been so consecrate
As to return what is thine own to thee.
And too, how sadly must thine insight mark
The thing I am. My very soul is stark,
Is starved upon the careless lees of days
Whose changeful purpose still my best betrays —
The best that would devote myself to thee.

I love the high and dream sublimity,
Yet time and place and a vague dalliance work
Upon my sense of values and I shirk
The pain of struggle to that blessed height
Where the Cross burns. I grope with the blurred sight
Of eyes myopic with inconstancy.

Dear God, make me devoted to the truth I see;
Let me, in these last days, with lowly pride,
Do every moment that which shall abide;
So may I yet, in some small part, atone —
My prayer rests in thy Father-Love alone!

NEW YORK AT NIGHT

Like lace upon the night,
Spun from the loom of trade,
The towers glow
Above the flow
Of shadowy roofs —
Arcades on vast arcades of darks
Pierced by the checkered lights,
Tiered row on row,
Where men lay blood and brain
Upon dim altars
Of old mythic Gods of Gain.

Adeline M. Jenney

A LEGEND OF THE FOREST TREES

One day, as God was listening
To prayers that came to Him,
He heard a whispered longing
From a forest's mighty limb.

"O Lord", it prayed, "let me be formed
Into a palace fit
For the most noble king on earth."
And God said, "So be it."

Another tree then dared to ask
To be a ship well known
By men who sail on all the seas
And live in every zone.

The Father kindly looked on it
And touched it with His hand,
"You shall have your request in full
But you may not understand."

A third tree shyly prayed, "Dear God,"
(And its leaves were aglow
With its earnestness to serve its Lord)
"Please let me always grow

"With branches pointing heavenward
To lead men's thoughts to Thee."
And God looked down on it with love
And breathed, "This, too, shall be."

The woodmen came and felled each tree
And dragged them out one morn.
The first became a cattle shed
Where the King of kings was born.

They fashioned one to be a boat
To sail on Galilee.
From this the Master calmed the storm
And leveled the rolling sea.

The tiny skiff has travelled far
On sea, to every land,
As men in faith have calmed their fears
With His "Peace, be still!" command.

The third tree sadly hung its head,
"They are making a cross of me!"
But ever since, it has pointed men
To the Christ of Calvary.

GOD CHUCKLES

I think that the Creator must have made some things for fun,
As well as for their beauty or their usefulness to man.
When He formed the bright snap-dragons with their soft close-
pressing lips,
Did they bloom as floret eardrops for the cherubs by His
plan?

Does the clownish, impish pansy bring a twinkle to His eye,
Or the waddle of the penguin in his ceremonial frock?
Does the gay coloratura of the wren with perky tail
Draw a chuckle, or the crowing of the adolescent cock?

He must revel in variety of form, of hue, of sound;
The stars in constellation shape a Dipper or a Chair;
They could have been like polka-dots in geometric mold,
Not a Scorpion, Orion, the Pleiades, or Bear.

I am glad that humor is a part of cosmical design,
And that God loves our jollity, and that laughter is divine.

I HEARD

The whir of wind in the poplars,
The lyric lilt of the lark,
The rat-tat-tat of the red head
As the sun was dispelling the dark —
It was May!

Harriett A. Jenney

SONG AGAIN!

When health is shattered and one's young strength wanes,
When all is dark and one must blindly grope,
Through tanglements of pain, and fear enchains,
And terror of long weakness leaves no hope.
How blest, if one, who once has been a prey
To clutches of despair but who has found
The path to quietude and sun-flecked way,
Now leads him from morass to solid ground
And through the foggy maze to open fields.
At first his tear-dimmed eyes see one small star.
Soon clouds of self are lifted and he yields
To sun-lit faith. But still there is one scar.
 He longs for helpful service, turns to bring
 Another to the Light, and then can sing.

THE REFINER'S FIRE

It is said that in the olden times an expert refiner of gold
Would hold a skillet of bits of ore above a white-hot blaze.
Patiently, over the glowing coals he moved it forward and back
Until the molten metal, at first impure and black,
Gleamed a lucent yellow. But still he kept his gaze
Upon the precious globule; and when he saw it hold
His likeness like a mirror, he knew his task was done.
So, often, we are in the fires of frustration or of pain;
But unlike the lifeless metal, we can cleanse ourselves of dross
With Thy help, O Great Refiner, who with sympathy and grace
Dost watch in every trial that all wrong be burned away;
And whenever Thou canst see in one the image of Thy face
Thou wilt pluck the gold from burning; and from the flame set
 free.
He can go forth as from Thy hand to serve the least for Thee.

REFLECTORS

As a tiny dewdrop on a rose becomes a shining sphere,
And as a limpid, quiet lake reflects the sky's bright eye;
So I would be unruffled by the many winds of fear,
To mirror forth undimmed the Light to all who may pass by.

Harriett A. Jenney

VACATION TIME

Vacation time, the time of rest,
Is a golden time for the upward quest, —
 To go with one whose life will sing
 As with the angels caroling,
Or climb alone the mountain crest.

Free from the daily stress, obsessed
By wearing work, one may attest
 Life is renewed by hallowing
 Vacation time.

This is the time to have as Guest
The One who met the sternest test
 By going by Himself to wing
 His upward thoughts — emerge as King.
His time of rest was always blest
 Vacation time.

SHUT-IN?

I am not shut in!
There's a window wide,
 And see, from where I lie,
The trees make gothic arches
 Through which I may glimpse the sky.

I'm not shut in!
For skillful hands
 Serve me and a hundred more;
While friends bring garden roses
 And love through the open door.

Shut in? Not I!
For in spite of pain,
 This is not a "chastening rod";
This quiet place with its skill and love
 Is revealing the great heart of God.

Harriett A. Jenney

OLD MAN'S SUMMER DAY

I saw an old man sitting on his front porch,
Waiting to die;
Today he counted the cars
And the men in black hats who went by.
And I wondered: What shall I count,
When I am an old man
Sitting on my front porch,
Waiting to die.

OLD LADY'S WINTER NIGHT

Tonight will be the last and tomorrow
They will say that she was queer;
That she was queer and he is gone
Who might have shed a tear.
But now the fire: three sticks this way
And four with a little turn;
Seven sticks are fair enough
To build a fire that never will burn.
And now the table, service for one,
With the little blue cup
And my pretty new cloth
With the bright colors up.
Tonight will be the last and tomorrow
They will say, it is clear
That the lady was old and quite feeble.
They also will say she was queer.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Let this one be the last, O Lord,
The last generation.
Let each of us grow old and die,
Without succession.

Leonard Jennewein

OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS

Give me an old fashioned Christmas,
With all its wholesome joys,
The kind we all remember —
When we were girls and boys.

Away from our streamlined living,
With all our modern ways,
Back to a quaint old kitchen,
On this great Day of Days.

I love the roar and crackle
Of the dear old-fashioned range,
And the smell of roasting turkey —
Well, that will never change.

I want a candle in the window,
Real evergreen on the door,
With mistletoe and holly
And friends, yes, friends galore.

And when the day is ending,
And the yule log burns low,
You'll remember an old-fashioned Christmas,
Long, in the afterglow.

MY WISH

If one wish could be granted,
It would not be fame or wealth;
But the world's most precious treasure,
The priceless boon of health.

Nellie M. Jensen

REVERIE

In the summer, in the evening,
In the soft and starry night,
When the hours pass like minutes
And the moon's a magic light,
Then I want to sit and revel
In the glories all around,
Feel the touch of tender breezes,
Hear their gentle, wooing sound.
Now and then, a bird's goodnight song
Breaks upon my reverie
And I listen more intently
To its soothing melody,
Like a benediction falling
On a soul in contrite mood,
Bringing peace and sweet contentment,
Realizing God is good.

Night of moonbeams, night of day dreams,
Stay the curtain of the dawn,
Let me muse a little longer —
All too soon I find you gone.

THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT

God gave the first and greatest Gift —
His Son, of priceless worth;
Down through the centuries of time
We celebrate His holy birth.

At Christmas tide goodwill abounds,
The giving spirit lives anew,
The love of God reveals itself
To all alike, gentile or Jew.

Myrtle Sylvia Johnson

DREAM HOUSE

Plan your Dream House with love and care
For the dear ones who are to reside there.
Make it a restful "Bethany"
Where all is peaceful harmony.

Whether your home is a lowly place
Or a palace which riches embrace,
It can be a little heaven there
Where happiness and love you share.

Tend it with unselfish devotion;
Leave outside the worldly commotion;
Blend it with colors that warm the heart,
Where order and beauty play a part.

Let sunshine in at the window pane,
Chase away the shadows and gain
Sunlight in your soul and then
You may reflect it unto men.

Choose beautiful pictures for the wall
That radiate good influence to all —
Those that enrich and elevate
As well as adorn and decorate.

Pluck flowers to delight and cheer
The friends who in your home appear,
To welcome, let a lovely rose
With friendliness your guests enclose.

Keep your home fires burning bright
With comfort and pleasures in full sight.
Let music, books and all that pleases
Be there to go with what appeases.

Oh, fill your Dream House with love and cheer,
Strive to create that atmosphere
Of contentment and security
Where God rules in supremacy.

Phoebe Johnson

A TRIBUTE TO MOTHER

I wish that God would grant me words to write
A tribute to my mother dear, tonight,

Then have it set to music clear and sweet,
By angels making tune and all complete.

That loving mother now has gone to rest
And dwells in God's bright heaven with the blest.

The thoughts would be my own and I would tell
With heaven-sent words of her I loved so well —

How she would teach His will and how to pray
And help us choose the good in life each day.

Her love and tender care were like the balm
Of gentle breezes bringing peace and calm.

Through prayer and patience and self sacrifice
Her life showed us the way to paradise.

Oh, may her children meet her up above,
And, while the angels play, chant words of love,

With praise and gratitude to Mother dear
For all her faithful service given here.

Phoebe Johnson

THE BUFFALO GRASS

The buffalo grass comes back across the plain.
I find it there, deep-carpeting the fields
The drouth had stripped. How valiantly it shields
The pasture slopes. I, who withstood the pain
Of wanton ravage, cannot now restrain
The tears. Head high I took the blow that yields
Defeat; unbent, the thrust that sorrow wields;
But bow before this benison, this gain.

And so with life! The haughty spirit stands
Undaunted by the searing winds of fate
Nor weeps before its devastated shrine;
But when the blades of love spring in its lands
Binding again its rich top-soil, the gate
Of pride is broken, healing tear drops shine.

WINDMILL SONG

There is one song we cannot do without
Here on the plains: The one the windmill sings.
A clanking discord to strange ears no doubt,
To prairie ears no sweeter music rings.

The slender tower tapers, tilted fans
Capture the breeze to turn the spinning wheel
That renders forth the melody that spans
The time since nature's laws knew no appeal.

At morning or at night, in storm or shine,
We hearken for the song, we lift our eyes
To view the turning wheel, a gracious sign
In silhouette against familiar skies.

Though man may boast the wind must do his will,
He knows he prospers on her sufferance still.

Rachel Cole Katterjohn

THE BROWN THRASHER

Ah, there's a flash of reddish brown!
Sweet music penetrates my ear;
Again that longed-for sign of spring,
For there's the call, "Come here! Come here!"

The gay brown thrasher has arrived —
His breast is streaked with brown and black;
In all his grace perched up so high,
He sweetly chants, "I'm back! I'm back!"

He poses with his head erect,
His tune melodiously in key.
When questioned of his song's delight,
His answer is, "It's free! It's free!"

I must not miss so great a treat;
But yet he seems to be aware;
As, cautiously, I near the door,
He acts alarmed, "Who's there? Who's there?"

And, as I peer and watch and wait,
Concealed behind the curtained door,
To my regret, he flits away,
And mocks me with, "No more! No more!"

A SMILE

You cannot buy it; you cannot sell it;
Yet when you give it, it makes a hit
And there's no income tax on it.

Mrs. E. J. Kauffman

I LOVE THESE HILLS

I love these Hills:
The cool, crisp mountain air,
The rich, gold sunlight slanting through the pines,
The noisy, tumbling streams;
Bluebirds mating in the early spring,
Raucous magpies quarreling in the wood,
And little glades, where aspens whisper low,
“Here dream your dreams.”

I love these Hills,
The balm of Gilead tree
Exudes its fragrance through the morning hours;
The air is still and sweet;
The timid deer hides in the quiet shade
Where violets lift their heads above the moss.
Here life is full, and summer days go by
On dancing feet.

BLACK HILLS SUMMER

Morning skies like a turquoise bowl
Cover the forest green;
At noon, light fluffs of snowy cloud
Rise from the hills between.
By afternoon, black thunder growls,
And the showers have just begun
When a gay breeze blows the clouds apart,
And once again — the sun!

OPPORTUNITY

I held a jewel in my hand
Just yesterday.
I watched it glow and glisten, then
It fled away!
I searched for it, but all my search was vain;
My open palm was void where it had lain.

Hilda Rosenquist Keyser

THE TEACHER

Each day I teach that two and two are four;
Each day I take a noun, a verb, a phrase,
And fashion sentences for little eyes to see
And ears to hear.
Each day I lead small, willing, restless feet
On paths of right and knowledge and good will,
And show that life's rich treasures may be found
So very near.

They sit before me, each an eager slave
To do my bidding. All day they are mine,
But when night comes a mother's hand turns down
The covers cool.
Sometimes I long to take them in my arms
And shield them from the cares I know will come,
But they must learn of things I cannot teach
In Life's own school.

PRAIRIE SPRING

Below the dam where willows grow, the stems are sleek and
yellow,
And brownish buds of ash and elm are slowly turning green.
A tractor hums, while shining plows turn furrows, dank and
mellow;
Among wild currants by the creek, gay pheasants strut and
preen.

Above the greening hills a pair of mallard ducks are flying,
Twin meadowlarks on post and knoll their hallelujahs fling
Across the budding prairie where a lone kildeer is crying,
And from the muddy pond the peepers shrill,
"It's Spring! It's Spring!"

Hilda Rosenquist Keyser

FARM BOY

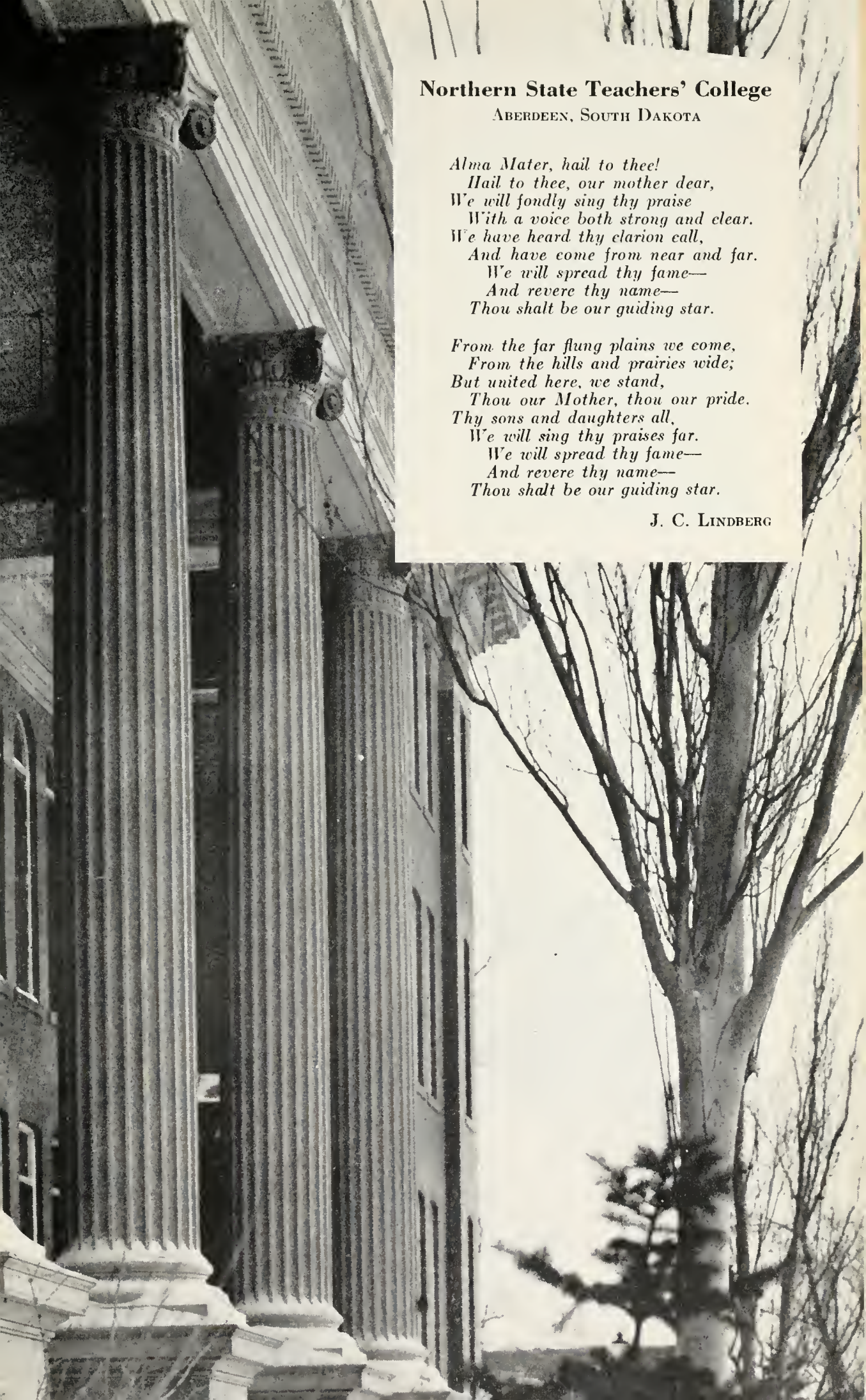
With swinging stride, you cross the pasture lot
To drive the full-fed cows in from the rye;
Your whistled song, like bird-notes half forgot,
Wings upward to the early morning sky.
Brave warder of the soil, you struggle on
Through drouth and heat and drift of winter snow,
With shoulders squared, your victory well won,
Your tanned cheek stained and battered hat-brim low.

The tassled corn will whisper in the breeze
And greening fields turn gold in autumn light,
Red apples ripen on the orchard trees,
Your shepherd dog keep lonely watch at night
About the farm — yet yours, the steady hand
That turns the black earth to the rising sun,
And yours, the tireless feet that, waiting, stand
Beside the pasture fence when day is done.

Farm lad, you are the hope of future years;
Your quiet strength, your song and cheering grin,
Are born of those intrepid pioneers
Who blazed the forest path, unmoved within
By storm and stress, who forged ahead to find
Life's farther trails by distant hill and stream
And build again on virgin land, more kind,
New homes that held, enthralled, love's fire and dream.

Untouched, you stand save by the grime of toil
In pride of growing manhood, strong and fair,
Like some young god who proudly walks the soil —
That men shall fear no ill, but bless you there.

Murray C. Kirk



Northern State Teachers' College

ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA

Alma Mater, hail to thee!

*Hail to thee, our mother dear,
We will fondly sing thy praise
With a voice both strong and clear.
We have heard thy clarion call,
And have come from near and far.
We will spread thy fame—
And revere thy name—
Thou shalt be our guiding star.*

*From the far flung plains we come,
From the hills and prairies wide;
But united here, we stand,
Thou our Mother, thou our pride.
Thy sons and daughters all,
We will sing thy praises far.
We will spread thy fame—
And revere thy name—
Thou shalt be our guiding star.*

J. C. LINDBERG



Sioux Falls College

SIoux FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

*O Sioux Falls College, our Alma Mater,
Our hearts are lifted in praise to thee;
The lives we live here are not forgotten,
Friendship made will go on eternally.
The Indian legends and school traditions
Recall the battles of mighty braves;
So in our living we'll strive to equal
Noble days of our ways at S.F.C.*

Words by JOHN SHAW '35
and EARL GROSS '36

LITTLE GIRL

And was it yesterday, my little girl,
That you came dancing through the garden gate
With tiny pail and spade and shining curl
Of wind-blown hair? I saw the puppy wait
Outside the fence, as, bending there,
You touched each waking bud and blossom rare.
But yesterday — when through the orchard trees
The robin's lilting song came on the breeze
And you sang, too, as in the quiet shade
Your sleeping doll, at last, you gently laid?

How gaily, through the hazy, autumn morn,
You rode upon your pony white to school —
With gay plaid scarf and bag, all frayed and worn,
To puzzle out your sums from book and rule!
How often, in the dusk, we watched the moon
Shine softly, like a lamp, above your bed
As all the little stars came out, and soon
You closed your eyes and laid your tousled head
Upon my heart and, in the twilight there,
I heard the Sandman tip-toe up the stair.

O, little girl, the years are gone, and now
Though clouds, like woolly lambs, play in the sky
The empty garden waits, no roses bow
Along the lonely walks where shadows lie.
This is not yesterday, it is today,
With you a little lady grown and gone away;
And yet, while on swift wings the hours pass,
I wait to hear your step upon the grass.

Murray C. Kirk

I MAY NOT DIE

Though silence shroud me in the quiet earth
And hold me there as if in endless sleep,
When spring puts forth bright bud and leaf, in birth
Renewed, I shall not lie in slumber deep.
With slow, still breathing of the soil and voice
That whispers in the waves of growing grain,
A part of tree and hill where winds rejoice
I shall be one with things that live again.
Why, then, be blind to immortality,
Or fail to know that Death is only Life
Within the warm, sweet ground, the mystery
Incarnate, in His plan of peace and strife?
Soul within the great Oversoul, shall cry
With ages, "Man is earth — he may not die!"

RAIN ON THE CORN

Golden tassels turning silver in the sun
Withered by the searing wind and heat,
Lift their crying voices when the noon is done
To call the rain from its far retreat.
Whitened leaf and stalk, unpainted by the frost
Bend beneath the torture from the sky,
Breathing faintly of the needed harvest lost —
"Father, feed us that we may not die!"

A mist-wraith stealing from out a passing cloud
Hiding field and pasture like a veil,
Soothes the fevered yearning with its cooling shroud,
Stills the moaning rustle and the wail.

Tall and straight in dewy splendor of the morn
Lives again the greening splendor of the corn.

Murray C. Kirk

ETERNAL SPRING
To Bess Lyman Lindberg

You left us when the chilling winds
Of winter cried upon the plain.
Where shall we find the thing that went
With you? How, now, take heart again?

You held the lamp of faith above
The dim, uncertain trail we trod;
And with unfailing courage met
Each heavy task with prayer to God.

Our Captain launched his Ship of Dreams
With precious cargo of our song.
He fell, and then, your woman's hand
Upon the helm, both firm and strong,

Brought us safely through the darker years
That took your strength and tried your soul;
But, neither weak nor despairing,
You sought Life's shining, farther goal.

Warm glow of sunlight gilds the earth
And in the fields the thrushes sing;
The thing that went with you returns
To live in the Eternal Spring.

LIFE

I thought I heard your noiseless footstep pass
Down silent garden walk and leaf-strewn aisle,
When dawn's first glow lay on the prairie grass,
And all things seemed to wait your voice and smile.
Then, murmured anthems in the somber trees
With faint wind notes from harps of morning crooned
In field, on purple trail and lilting breeze,
The waking song of Life to love attuned.
Fair angel, from the mystic throne of God
You brought, that soft spring day, with blessing mild,
To one small home reared on the virgin sod,
His dearest handiwork, the living Child.
Through shining portals clothed in ageless light,
A new-born soul came safely through the night.

Murray C. Kirk

10 TRIUMPHE

Alone, alone, the wind and I
Crush the vault of the somber sky,
Pinion it to the craven land,
Feel them writhe in our grimy hand,
Thrice as broad as the sun is high.
Our long breath sucks the creek-bed dry,
Grasses wither, bleak willows die,
Whipped on the rock left bare to stand
Alone alone

Cowed and driven, the wild birds fly
Blind in the dust; their feeble cry
Protests the fury on the grand
Cadenza, rising as the sand
Vaunts our triumph! — the wind goes by
Alone alone

CROQUIS FROM MEMORY

Once there was spring — a waking day
Of earth-rain green, and sky-touched gray,
And water running in a rill,
'Till not a rock was truly still.
Gray goose, mallard, and great, white swan
A-northward wedging, ever on —
Kit buds soft on a willow tree —
So long ago — so near to me.

Hester Koppenhaver

MY FRIENDLY TOWN

It was not so many years ago
A stranger came to town,
He asked for nothing, save the right
To stay and settle down.

He had wandered many miles, he said,
The long road seemed to have no end;
For he was searching for a place
Where everyone would call him friend.

And when this little town he saw,
Clothed in the white of fallen snow,
He breathed a prayer that at last he had found
The place he had sought since long ago.

For here the folks live Chrisitan lives,
They share each others' joy and pain
And helping fellowman is worth
Far more than any worldly gain.

I am the stranger who came to town,
Here I reached the long roads' end
And my heart was filled with a peace and joy
That magic day when you called me friend.

SATISFIED MAN

I've always lived pretty much alone,
Out in the mountains with all the wild things,
And the sweetest music I've ever known
Is the song that the river sings.

And in the evening when daythings are still,
And I build my fire and light up my pipe,
I hear the haunting call of the whippoorwill
And the plaintive cry of the killdeer and snipe.

Oh, it's nice to be out in the woods in the gloam
And know you are free of the city man's plight,
To have for a roof the sky's starry dome
And for a lullaby, sounds in the night.

Emil P. Krupp

FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is much too precious
To be lightly thrown away
Through gossip and lies and slander
That so often rule the day.

Could we know of the sorrow and anguish
And heartache and pain and grief
Caused by the tongue's black venom
Its life would be very brief.

Could we know of the years of trouble
Brought to a shrinking heart,
We would not be so ready
To throw out the poison dart.

Friends are so few and precious,
Let us keep the ones we've made
That life may become sweeter and finer
Let the beauty of friendship not fade!
(From Reflections)

RIGHT HERE

Oh, I feel that I am growing old and weary
And my cheeks have lost their bloom, my steps are slow;
But the memory of my youth still keeps me singing
The hymns the old church choir sang long ago.

When I sat and played and peddled the church organ
I felt that heaven surely must be near;
But now I sit where peace and love surround me
And truly know that heaven is right here.

PRAYER

Prayer is the peace of the spirit,
The tempest in us it stills;
Let us bring to Him all our trials,
All things are done as He wills.

Man's prayer is a self-revelation
Of his ever seeking soul;
Prayer is the strong foundation
For a life that is full and whole.

Elida J. Larson

THE STONE WITH THE BROKEN HEART

Silver sand and silica,
Fanned by desert sigh,
Softly reflect the gray-blue mist
Of a tropic twilight sky.

Thus they form together
A rare and precious stone,
The "broken-hearted" opal
Whose minute flaws are known.

Though it has defective fissures,
God planned them for the best;
In them the lovely sunset rays
Gleam on the desert's breast.

And He who formed the opal
Will some day let me see
That in the scars of my broken hope
His love shines bright in me.

TOO LATE

Let no kind words lie unspoken in my heart
To agonize me in some future day
When time has wrought it that we are apart—
Too late, my friend, for things I long to say.

MOUNT RUSHMORE AT DAWN

Song birds call with yearning in their cry,
Raise glossy wings, fan clouds on jagged crest.
Mount Rushmore looms, ominous and high,
Purple banks hang off in the west.

Stars grow dim and dawn sends copper rays
Where silver birch and dewy pine trees nod;
Mount Rushmore, in a veil of morning haze,
Gleams like a bronze and stately ancient god.

Silverine H. Larson

AN INSEPARABLE PAIR

Beauty is to pain akin,
Pursuing one, we find its twin,
Evading pain,
We lose the twain.

IN GOD'S LABORATORY

The morning glory of heavenly blue
From dark earth brings the sky's own hue,
And may not we from darkest hours,
Derive our highest, noblest powers?

SURPRISE IN BLUE

Under a fair and cloudless sky
Of May, we wandered, you and I,
Until we came upon a knoll
And paused a while in pleasant stroll.

And there a flash of brightest blue
Across my path of vision flew,
I never dreamt 'twould be my lot
To see a bluebird on that spot!

Then walking gaily at your side,
All unawares, a glance I spied
Of deeper warmth, a love's caress,
And knew my lot was — happiness.

Theodora Lau

WINTER NIGHT

Starlight and moonlight
And a path across the snow
And not a thought but to follow
Where the footprints go.
A crisp breeze through the trees
Fans my cheeks aglow —
I nod at things as I pass by,
Content to have them so.

SPRING MORNING

Blue sky overhead
With white clouds scudding,
Dew-wet underfoot
With new grass budding —
A thrill in my blood,
My heart like a feather,
For again Spring and I
Walk here together.

I WOULD RATHER STUMBLE

I hate to have to watch my step
When I go walking in the woods.
I would rather watch the sky,
Through the winding aisles of trees,
Make way for the rising moon,
Than be wary of fallen branches
And sound cautiously
Each leaf-filled hollow.
I would rather see the first star —
And stumble.

MY HOME

The hills rise in beauty in the west,
Their trails inviting me to roam,
The lakes mirror beauty in the east,
But the prairie is my home.

Gladise Hiatt Lenser

IN THE HEART OF A FLOWER

I looked into the heart of a flower
And there I saw Beauty —
Dewdrops pearled without a flaw,
Vast distances of unexplored desire,
Crystal pools that mirror moon and star,
And love perfected in the soul of man —
These things I saw
In the heart of a flower.

I looked into the heart of a flower
And there I saw Truth —
And everywhere was Order,
Exquisite Harmony and Law;
I saw the Master Architect compute
The formulae of Time and Space,
Survey the paths for Mercury and Mars
And fix for every sphere its place —
These things I saw
In the heart of a flower.

I looked into the heart of a flower
And there I saw God —
Beauty — Transcendent Love; Truth — Transcendent Law;
These things I saw
In the heart of a flower.

WORK

Thank God for work. I would not idle be
And miss the chance to learn life's trick and trade.
With calloused hands and seasoned, active brain,
I face the future, eager, unafraid.

James C. Lindberg

THE DUST THAT WAS I

Says One:

Bury me deep in the cool, black earth,
Sealed in a box of steel, air tight;
Thus let me lie till the Judgment Day,
My dust intact through the long, long night.

Says Another:

In rich, warm soil, in a shallow grave,
Snug in a box of the softest pine —
Thus let me hear the pattering rain
And feel the touch of the warm sunshine.

And there as the seasons come and go,
As the flowers bloom or the cold winds blow;
Let Nature reclaim what she cheerfully gave
When the dust that was I is consigned to the grave.

This dust that was I — exquisitely fine,
Quintessence distilled from the rarest of Earth,
God's consummate skill could no better combine —
Returns to its source and awaits a rebirth.

A rosebush, a tree, shall look up to the sky,
Whose rootlets are fixed in this dust that was I,
And I shall arise into flower and tree —
Resurgent and Living, eternally Free.

RETALIATION

A foolish hermit closed his doors and said:
"I'll live a Godly life untouched by sin."
Alas! Who builds a wall about himself
Shuts out much more of God than he shuts in.

James C. Lindberg

FLOWER-GARDEN DREAM

The charm of Grandma's patch-work quilt
Lay not in uniform design,
In sprays and leaves or trailing vine,
In squares or blocks precisely built.

My Grandma's "Flower-Garden Dream,"
With prints, just hit-and-miss and gay,
Was wrought in that old-fashioned way,
All quilted with a tiny seam.

The patches caught her vision there;
And as she dreamed, her fingers flew,
While lovely thoughts came shining through
In colors rich beyond compare.

I treasure that old quilt, something
She thought was not of lasting worth;
Nor did she know, while here on earth,
The charm her patch-work quilt could bring.

TO A FIGURINE

Alluring Dresden-china Miss,
Among the bric-a-brac,
Your costume is colonial
And shines like bright shellac.

You well reveal the period
When you were gay, alert,
When men wore wigs of powdered hair —
You charming little flirt.

Frances N. Loucks

GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE

There was a peace within God's temple walls
Where breezes strummed their vibrant chords, and calls
Of mocking birds re-echoed in the hills
Above the music of the tumbling rills;
The fragrant petal-scent was everywhere,
Not one discordant note upon the air;
I felt His presence there and knelt to pray
Beside the sylvan lake at close of day.
That starlit night with crescent moon hung low
I walked alone with God beneath its glow.

NOSTALGIA

I must go back to my old home once more,
Where daffodils and tulips lift their heads
In lovely May, before the open door,
Where velvet faces peer from pansy beds,
And where the cut-leaf birch tree droops and spreads
Soft shadows, flickering, across the sill,
And reminisce, while morning sunlight threads
New strands of gold among the vines that spill
Their mingled hues of cheer, upon the low-flung hill.
I must go back and wander through the hall,
Ascend the broad, familiar stair, survey
Each room and every cozy nook, recall
The happy hours my loved one spent, each day,
With roses and delphiniums, and stay
To quell a yearning for the home I knew,
By gleaning one more exquisite bouquet,
Remembering the luscious berries, too;
I know I shall be healed, by coming where they grew.

Frances N. Loucks

SOUTH DAKOTA SUNSET

The giant, blue-gray vault that is the sky
Mellows to wondrous beauty, langorously,
Cerise and lilac, fluting on a bank
Of white, inweaves the drifts of fading blue.
Each fleece-like cloud, serenely floating by,
Is fringed with silver, amethyst or gold.
Reflections reach above, to north, to south,
Until the whole world seems to be aflame;
Then, dropping past the westerly sky-line,
The after glow becomes a saffron lake.
The dome of deepening purple overhead
Is punctured like a sieve with golden stars,
And Luna rises, guardian of the night.

WOODLAND PEACE

I love to walk a lonely mountain trail
And revel in God's perfect handiwork.
Grandfather trees with tangled beards of moss
Stand guardian to the smaller forest folk
Who find a haven from the restless winds
And predators who skulk along their path.
The rich and springy carpet of leaf mold
Is strewn with dainty, yellow violets.
Huge tracks of bear appear along the trail
And lead to salmon berries' crimson lush.
Luxuriant ferns, both fairy form and great,
Offer to bird and beast a safe retreat.
The restful semi-gloom is luminous
With trillium and dogwood's fragile white.
Enchanting melody of bright-hued birds
Attune my soul to peace beyond all dreams.
What grandeur, beauty and simplicity
In nature, all unspoiled by human hands.

Edna B. Madison

SPRING IS HERE

Today I felt the south wind blow
And watched it melt the lingering snow;
I heard a robin's note of cheer;
So now I know that spring is here.

Two sparrows chirrup in their bath
In icy puddles in my path;
And proudly struts old chanticleer,
So now I know that spring is here.

The willows have new coats of fur;
Sometimes I seem to hear them purr;
And on the lawn green tips appear;
So now I know that spring is here.

SLEET STORM

Nature glistening in the sun
Wears gems of every hue;
Crystal trees have fingers ringed,
Shimmering sapphire blue.
Diamonds set in platinum
Are beaded through their hair;
It took the gloom of yesterday
To place those jewels there.

MIRACLE

The naked branches of the wild plum tree
Held naught of beauty as I gazed last night;
Today a miracle of spring appeared,
The tree was bridle-gowned in lacy white.

WHICH?

A storm has power
To fascinate or dismay;
God's omnipotence
Is shown through jagged lightning
And cannonading thunder.

Edna B. Madison

THE JIM

By act of law they named you James,
Dear placid river,
They said your name was crude,
Undignified, and lacking euphony —
That dear, familiar name you wore
Through all the frontier days,
Through state-hood's birth and growing fame.
So they met in legislative halls,
Debated pro and con, and legalized
A name for you.

What name?
That one bestowed upon you
In the long ago,
By brave adventurers who little dreamed
Of days to come, when you would let
The formal title slip aside;
Replaced by one more intimate —
A name that sprang
Straight from the hearts of sturdy pioneers,
Who loved you for your trail
Of living water
Across the wide prairie.

"A rose by any other name" — a river too,
Let them call you what they will,
But to us who hold
Remembrance of the dear gone days,
You will always be —
The Jim.

Mary Frances Martin

THAT NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM

They lit no Christmas candle
In Bethlehem that night,
To flash across the darkness
In golden gleaming bright,
To harbinger the coming
Of the great Eternal Light.

God lit a Christmas candle
In the midnight sky.

They sang no Christmas carols
When dusk came softly down,
They had no room for humble guests
Late come to Bethlehem town,
They left it to a cavern shed
To shelter Heaven's Crown.

While angels caroled Glorias
Around the Cavern door.

They gave no gift of courtesy
When humble travelers came,
Not cup of wine, nor wheaten cake,
Not even candle flame,
They gave not any gift at all
In the Lord — God's name.

But a lowly manger cradled
God's Christmas Gift to them.

IN BALLYJACKBUFF

In Ballyjackbuff is a red rowan tree,
In a fairy rath under the lee of a hill,
And a little thatched hut in a crook of the road,
I'll wager old Roger is sitting there still —
His stump of a pipe letting out a great puff,
While he cobbles the shoes of all Ballyjackbuff.

In Ballyjackbuff is a weeshoe Boreen,
Its whins are so golden, its blackbirds so gay,
Its hedges all misted with sweet Irish rain,
You'd not see its like in a year and a day.
Of thraipsing the world I've had more than enough,
So I'm stepping it out now to Ballyjackbuff.

Mary Frances Martin

A LIFE OF LOVE

(In Memory of O. W. Coursey)

His twilight on the prairie was well spent;
For courage never failed his valiant soul.
His toil has left a precious monument
And set for us a higher, richer goal.

A timeless testimonial, his life
Will live to bless the lives of countless others,
For though he knew there must be bitter strife,
He taught that God has made all men as brothers.

Through his rare pen we may appreciate
The plans and vast nobility of scope
Of those who persevered to make our state,
Defying hardships with high faith and hope.

BROWNIE FROLICS

Rain drops
Come pitapat.
Now heel, now toe, they sound
Like brownies dancing on the roof
At night.

THE GOLD OF YEARS

(To One at the Sunset of Life)

The fires are burning low for me to-night
But youthful memories are warm and bright
Amid the ashes of the later years;
How wonderful that joy outlives the tears!
The wrongs and hurts, forgotten, leave a peace
Which harbors only love and kind surcease
Of earth-bound thoughts. I long to see at last
The dear familiar faces of the past.
The loved ones I have found along the way
Seem dearer as I near the close of day;
So stir the fire that I may clearly see
The golden glow of precious memory.

Mildred McEwen

MY SONG TO PAHA SAPA

Why should my soul hold silence
And my spirit not try to write
About Dakota's lovely Hills
When they are kissed by white moonlight! —

Why should my soul hold silence
And my tongue not try to tell
Of Paha Sapa, smoke-black mountains,
Beloved home where the Sioux dwell!

Why should my soul hold silence
And my voice not try to sing
Of rugged hills and high skyline
Notched with rocks and wind-bent pine!

For oh, my soul goes forth at night
To spin with shadows that web moonlight;
To praise the Lord in the portal's shade,
To sing the song the psalmest gave:

"I will lift mine eyes unto the hills —
My help cometh from the Lord"
Who made them and at their birth
Engraved their beauty upon them!
Thanks be to God!

A SPLIT-SECOND WITH SUNSET

Salmon pink and turquoise blue
Spattered the sky, within my window-view;
And the earth that stretched out to the horizon below
Was snugly wrapped in a blanket of snow
Tufted and tied by threaded pink light
Holding reflection of sunset-glow —
For just a split-second! — before night
Rolled down her shade
And took the picture away
Which the sunset's rays had made.

Rhea Smith Meek

SMILE

When the clouds look big and gray,
Smile;
This may be your lucky day,
Smile;
And don't give up, your job's not done
Because the other party won;
Look high enough, you'll see the sun,
Smile!

No one wants you looking sad,
Smile;
Their troubles may be just as bad,
Smile;
You can't expect each day to be
Filled with happiness for *me*
For life is give and take you see,
So smile!

REMEDY FOR BLUES

Look for the sunniest side of the street,
Laugh at the storm clouds that shadow your day,
Push them aside for the good things you meet,
Smile and those dark clouds will soon roll away.

THEIR CROSS

Though they are blind, they too can clearly see;
For they possess a gift of inner sight
And need no eyes with which to sense the light
Of day; nor do they need their eyes to be
As conscious of this changing world as we.
They work at many trades, they sing and fight
For freedom; God has given them the right
To live a useful life, one that is free.
I sometimes wish that I could be as gay
And go through life in happiness and smile,
In spite of everything. If I could be as strong
In my belief, along life's struggling way,
Without my eyes, would life still be worthwhile?
Would I still have the heart to sing a song?

Beverly Jeanne Mickelson

SPHINX AND ELF

The mother cat lies watching,
Solemnly blinking at intervals,
Calm, serene, quizzical —
Like the Sphinx
The waves of the desert sand are in her stripes.

Her fluffy youngster
Has delicate silver aerials
Above each eye —
He is tuned in to witch music!
He is nothing like the Sphinx.
He has much in common with a jolly Hallowe'en elf;
But his tail, standing straight up,
Looks exactly like a plump, stubby Christmas tree,
Except that its stripes
Slant in the wrong directions to be branches.

The solemn-eyed Sphinx tries to conceal her pride
In the Hallowe'en elf with the Christmas-tree tail.

THIS MORNING

A million happy sun fairies
Are tap-dancing on the river
In their golden shoes.

THE SUN COMES!

The roosters, spick and span in white,
Are calling loud farewell to Night:
A gaudy quilt, with ribbon ties,
Is spread across the eastern skies;
The wakening collie's amber coat
Becomes bright gold; ivory his throat;
And flashing on proud peacock tails
Are bubbles, bright as rainbow trails.

Marcella Milburn

THE WIND

We love the wind
When it lingers,
When it sings.

We love the wind
When it slides
Its gentle fingers
Over leaves at evening,
And pats
The little wings
Of tired birds
Asleep.

We love the wind
When it lingers,
When it sings.

THE THREE-YEAR-OLD

I told her of the little mouse,
Who has a cellar for his house,
A coat of slickest, softest gray,
Two little eyes as bright as day,
A nose so sharp,
A tail so long,
Ears so keen,
And teeth so strong —

“Buy ME a mousie, Mamma!”

MAKING RUFFLES

The white waves rush along the shore
Making rows of ruffles — from very frothy lace —
For the blue veil
Of the river.

THE BLACK CAT

Our Pussy looks so smart and neat,
Lying there with tucked-in feet;
Is he vain, do you suppose,
Of satin fur and velvet nose?

Marcella Milburn

THE SUMMONS

A summons, tender, clear, insistent rings
Throughout the temple of my soul today;
It is a summons from the King of kings
To lay aside all lesser things, and pray.

My heart is awed at this majestic call —
The voice and message are for me alone.
Is He, Creator and the Lord of all
Inviting me to meet Him at His Throne?

But I will not delay with doubts and fears,
The time that He appoints is always best;
I take Him all my failures, guilt and tears,
I bring away His pardon, joy and rest!

A VALENTINE

When wrens and robins never sing
Their April roundelay,
When purple lilacs never give
Their fragrance to the May,
When lovers never know the spell
Of starry, summer nights,
And children's eyes are never wide
At twinkling Christmas lights,
When rivers cannot find the way
Out to the ocean blue, —
Long after that, Dear Heart of Mine,
I'll still be loving you.

Clara Cressey Mingus

MAYTIME

Love was born in Maytime,
'Tis true, I know 'tis so!
In the warm glow of its sunshine
When earth is so happy to grow.

Oh, Faith was born in the Winter
When the skies were dark and chill.
It seemed that life would never come back,
Earth lay so white and still.

And Hope was born in Springtime
When through the crusted sod
Frail little plants crept out of the earth
And lifted wee hands to God.

Then Love was born in Maytime,
'Tis true I surely know,
For May's tiny rosebuds
Softly told me so.

STARS

Stars are for thoughts in the night time,
When, weary and spent with the day,
The soul reaches out in its longings
To hope and to dream and to pray.

As, out of the infinite darkness
Shining with radiance bright,
They bring peace to the heart that is vanquished,
And beauty, and blessing, and light.

Stars are for thoughts in the night time
When God and the angels are near,
And the soul finds rest from its conflicts,
And healing and comfort and cheer.

Lou Morse

LOVE

Love
is a mighty flame
that burns
and burns . . .
and never burns away.

It is the only
thing I have
that I can give
and give . . .
and never
give away.

Today
so many calls
were made
upon my love.
I gave
and gave
and marvelled
for the more
I gave
the more
I had
to give away.

Sister M. Leonardo, O.S.B.

DANDELIONS

Twinkling starlets of the dawn
Rooted in the clod,
Stars that look not down on man
But up to God.

Sister M. Jeanette, O.S.B.

FIAT

"Be it done to me
according to Thy word."
The Angel, herald of
the will of God, had heard,
And hastened back
to gladden heavenly throng
With Mary's "Fiat" —
future Vesper song.

This day God's Angel
comes to me.
The will of God in what he bears
is hard to see.
Sorrow, pain — no matter,
I must joyfully say
"Fiat"; happy that
His will is done this day.

Sister M. Jeanette, O.S.B.

VESPERTINE IN R MAJOR

A robin's calm persistent chirp
Is clear above the blustering wind
That shoos the gray clouds, huddled
In the sun-streaked western sky.
Cowed by the wind's pomposity,
With dangling wings they scuttle away.
In one broad sweep the drabness disappears;
Sky and river are red aglow.
And yet — a robin's clear repeated chirp
Pierces still the wild March wind.

Sister M. Roswitha Zavadil, O.S.B.

APERI DOMINE

Song
is
Love at Prayer
And if we pray
And love not,
'Tis no longer song
But sound.

Open Thou my lips, O Lord,
That I may sing
That I may love
That I may pray —
These three are one.

Sister M. Jane, O.S.B.

TREASURED HOURS

The night is filled with sweet delight —
A garden path with fragrant flowers,
You walk within a golden light,
As love now brings its treasured hours.

Night birds' melodic songs are heard,
Where moonbeams finger shadowed bowers;
The wind repeats a promised word,
As love now brings its treasured hours.

The night is love eternally,
Where stars are lamps in dreams' high towers —
Our hearts are tuned to melody.
As love now brings its treasured hours.

EVENING

Flamboyant leaves of autumn's passing show
Reflect the glory of the closing day,
Recast, on breast of water's gentle flow,
A flame upon the hills, a glad array.
There's not a stir as daylight slowly fails,
No sound intrudes on earth's serenity,
Except the wary tread of deer on trails,
That mottled shrubbery hides protectingly.
Departing day has whispered its goodbyes;
Earth draws its mantle close and veils its face;
The countless stars are opening bright eyes,
As night serenely waits its destined place.

O calm, unhurried hour — prelude of night,
When all of nature glows with evening's light!

Ellen Ochs

YOUR LETTER

Your letter reads — “nothing to say,
The same things happen, day by day.”
But this is what it does convey;

Your friendly smile, your own warm cheer,
Your face; the picture is so clear
It seems as if you’re standing here!

Again I share the joys we knew.
The world seems such a lovely hue,
Because I’ve had this word from you.

OLD-TIME FIDDLER

Across the hills, across the plains,
His music led the way
For pioneers who held the land;
He made their gatherings gay.
His fiddle called; folks answered to
The music, wild and sweet,
And emphasized its chuckle with
The thud of dancing feet.

Across the hills, across the years,
He helped to build our land,
The fiddle tucked beneath his chin,
Bow flashing in his hand.
He played the music of his heart
With rhythm warm and strong,
And folks forgot their hardships as
They rested in its song.

Helen Oitto

BLOOD FLOWS

Scattered across battlefields,
Young men writhe
In awful pain;
Some are dying,
Some have lain
Soaked in blood . . .
Not much harm —
Just lost
A leg or an arm.
They come home,
Maimed, blind.
They are heroes of war,
So never mind.
Blood flows — blood flows.
(I got two pair of nylon hose.)
“We’ll be short of sugar,
Get one hundred pounds.”
“We can’t get tires.
How’ll we make the rounds?”
“Germans —
They’re a horror.
God damn the Japs
This time we’ll wipe ’em
Right off the map.”
Blood flows — blood flows.
(I got two pair of nylon hose.)
Merciful God —
When will it cease?
What do we mean —
Make the peace?
What is victory?
Shall men die in vain?
Will it ever happen again?
Dear God —
We dare not hope.
“They say there will be
A shortage of soap.”

Norma L. Olson

THE ELDEST SON IS DEAD

Word goes out —
“Their eldest son is dead —
Thrown from a mower —
Found dead in the field!”

Neighbors leave food
Not yet served to the threshers —
“Come at once!
Joe’s need help!
An accident —
Their son!”

Word goes out —
Listening friends
On country lines —
“The eldest son is dead.”

Uncles, aunts, cousins,
Drop everything to go.
With silent handclasp,
They let the good folks know
The depth of understanding,
The bond of family ties,
The grief that all must feel
Because on them
There lies
Sorrow — deep —
Not fully grasped.

An arm about the shoulders,
A pat on a bowed head —
There isn’t much to say —
The eldest son is dead.

Next day
The family goes
To do the things
That must be done.
Folks come to get them dinner.
“They’ll eat chops,
If we fix ’em some.”

A woman comes with berries.
"Is there anything the dinner lacks?"
At the door, hat in hand, a man speaks:
"I have come to cut the flax."

God bless country folks —
Folks of no renown!
And oh, dear God,
Keep safe the little town!

IT CAUSETH ME TO TREMBLE

The audience held its collective breath
As your magnificent voice sang out —
Cried out —
Then dropped to a whisper —
A whisper:
"Were you there when they
Crucified my Lord?"

We knew your skin was black.
In that brief, suspended time
We knew
The sins
Of the world.
That is why we wept.
That
Is why we wept.

But it was only
Beautiful music;
Few recognized
The shame —
The lie on our lips:
"No room in the Inn."
The lie —
No room
In the Inn.

"It causeth me
To tremble."

Oh it causeth
Me — to tremble.

Norma L. Olson

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Norma L. Olson

IN OLD MEXICO

Beautiful cathedrals,
Marvels to behold,
Chapels to the saints,
Done in tons of gold,
Lavish paintings,
Filigree —
Awe inspiring —
Such splendor I had come far
To see.

But the woman at the gate —
“Ten centavos, lady.”
Filthy rags —
How she stoops.
The eyes are dim,
One eyelid droops.
She holds out her scrawny hand —
“Ten centavos, lady.”
She wails through the centuries,
“Ten centavos, lady.”

And you with the heavy load,
Too poor to own a cart,
Put the burden on your back,
But tell me — what of art?
How can you know beauty?
Underfed, you live in grime,
Creating lovely things,
With no sense of time.

That vase — a miracle of color!
Look at the design —
Simply exquisite detail —
What is this quirk of mine
That from the lovely things for sale
That woman rises up to wail,
“Ten centavos,
Ten centavos,
Ten centavos, lady.”

Norma L. Olson

BANISHING MY DREAMS

I rubbed the star dust from my eyes,
Removed, with care, my moon-drift gown,
Shut out the music of the wind
Which through the flue came singing down,
Took off my slippers — vagrant things
That urged my feet to leave the old,
Worn paths and take the rainbow trail
To seek its hidden pot of gold.
I put aside my foolish cap
Adorned with flaming rainbow bows —
Then banished all to dungeon room
And sought with care the door to close —
Prosaic tasks were waiting me . . .

But then — I heard a robin sing!
And lo! my dreams have rent their bars —
Are here again . . . and so is spring!

PURPOSE

They dragged the stones for Cheops' tomb,
The driver's lash was dripping red —
Each step but added to their hate,
As fuel to a fire is fed.

Another land — another time —
And men were dragging great blocks, too,
But pious zeal made light their load,
And so a dream toward heaven grew.

Cathedral stone — a living hope!
The pyramid's — a soulless clod!
For one was piled to earthly pride —
The other rose to gladden God!

Madge O'Meara

NIGHT'S CANDLES

Angels hover near
Our roofs at night, carrying
Candles of our Lord.

HOAR-FROST

The trees are having a party,
The silver ball of the year;
For days they have been whispering
That the happy event is near.
The beauty shops are all opened,
And in order to make things right,
They have many operators working
Continually, day and night.
An annual affair in this party;
Full is the society page;
For the trees are nearly as pretty
As they are in spring's foliage.

THE ELM TREE

An elm tree stands at the garden wall.
There are other trees, large and small,
But this one has such charm and grace,
It seems to quicken my very pace;
And when the rain falls it gracefully bends
As if to thank God for the gift He sends.

BRAVE MEN

We owe a debt to those who broke the sod;
They were such brave courageous men, who trod
Behind the plow. Each fertile furrow brought
A strengthened hope; they knew the gifts they sought.
They built fine homes and, as their children grew,
They schooled them in the virtues these men knew.
They tilled the fields with thrifty, honest pride,
And friendliness came from each door thrown wide.

Mary Daly Overas

DAKOTA SPRING

Exquisite the joy of a bright sunny day
Just as the winter is passing away.
When soft breezes blow, the robins are new,
And Heaven comes smiling right down from the blue,
Grim winter is gone with grey cloud and cold;
Now sweet on the earth shines a sun of pure gold.
A meadow lark trills — call to Spring's rendezvous.
Ah! Give him an answer. Let your heart trill, too.

BEAUTY

My heart's first love was Beauty;
It did me so beguile
That still I thrill to a pretty face,
To the magic of a smile.

And then I loved the spring's soft bloom,
A swift free ride at morn,
Sweet solitude, the sparkling sea,
A book — with thoughts fresh born.

But years have taught me Beauty new.
Ah! now I realize
The truest Beauty of them all
Is that of sacrifice.

THE WORLD IS WIDE

The world is wide —
God made it so,
That living things
Might have space to grow,
A perpetual challenge to us below.

That living thing — my soul — grows, too,
When my mind tries out for a broader view.

Mildred Irwin Peterson

A WILD ROSE BLOOMING

I saw a wild rose blooming
Far up a trestle wall,
Where weeds half-heartedly took root,
And train smoke cast a pall.

I saw a wild rose blooming,
Exquisite there so high;
It seemed to bless with beauty
A world which hurried by.

I saw a wild rose blooming . . .
I wondered — did it care
That all alone it had to bloom
And waste its fragrance there.

And then I thought of Sharon's Rose
Who chose to bloom on earth
And brought us Truth and Faith and Love,
Those things of truest worth.

His radiance seemed to beckon
All the beauty we have known
And made us wish in word and deed
To emulate His own.

Wild Rose, be not despairing
Up there in darksome sod;
Because you bloom someone has paused
And found the face of God.

MY MOTHER

In a world of noisy living,
She was like a quiet room
Which the flowers of her thinking
Filled with fragrant, sweet perfume.

She is gone . . . Her day is ended.
Now her tasks are left to me.
Keep me, Lord, as poised and peaceful;
Keep me quiet — as was she.

Mildred Irwin Peterson

NOSTALGIA

The sight that I have seen for many weeks
From my friend's lovely house upon this hill,
Is definitely not the thing for me,
For I have looked and looked and had my fill.

The skyline, like a monstrous, jeweled pin,
Is fastened on the east when night reveals;
Too, I have viewed Manhattan at close range
And felt its noises following at my heels.

But I have looked and now I must go back
To rustic home on South Dakota sod,
Where I can see the sun rise once again . . .
Upon my prairie . . . in the land of God.

GREEN THUMB

To A. M. J.

She has plants at her windows
Which flourish and grow
Out of all proportion
To the pots they know.

She can pluck a green
From out of the wild
And it grows taller
As her child.

She takes people no larger
Than a fig,
And in a short time
She has pulled them big.

There is so much magic
In her touch,
Because her heart
Can love so much.

Edna W. Pikerine

SHOOTING STAR

Standing on a hill one hot, dark night
I saw a shooting star break into light.
 It fell so swiftly
Through the blue-black dark
Growing as it fell from tiny spark to reddish flare
That I scarce drew a breath
 With beauty there.

But when that light had faded, I could hear
The speaking silence of the North Star, cool and clear,
 The holy silence
Of that star we always see
Shining with a sweet fidelity from year to year
And I scarce drew a breath with
 God so near.

TRIAD

These be
Such restful things:
A star . . . a mountain brook . . .
A robin's muted song at close
Of day.

ON SUNSET HILL

The prairie sea is cloth-of-gold
The sky is amber, shot with flags
 Of flaming red
Slowly the sun is gone
And Thunder, growling,
Lifts a sullen, massive head.
 The day is dead.

Beth Pirsch

AT NIGHT

And so
Do flow
The streams
Of dreams,

All night
Till light,
No sound
Around —

Silk sails,
Sweet tales,
Soft things
On wings.

FAITHFULNESS

My love burns for you
Steadily — as a bright lamp
In a windless place.

TREE LORE

Listen
To old pine trees:
They have been growing tall
So long, they must have more to tell
Than man.

ETERNITY

There's rain
On the back of
The wind . . . And purple violets
Are born.

Beth Pirsch

FOR NOISY LITTLE BOYS

Leave them their laughter; let them be gay.
Childhood is precious, too soon the day
Burdened with weeping, heavy with fear.
Let them be joyous; gladness is dear.
Let them run shouting; let them be wild.
Noise is a rapture. Last come the mild
Passionless years. Then they will go
Weighted with wisdom, silent and slow.

DAKOTA WINTER

The earth and time seem now to have no goal;
Without a purpose, days and work lack zest.
Our lives march on, a cheerless round at best;
The prairie is a dreary, snow-filled bowl.
Forgotten now the heart's exultant race
Beneath the curling green of reborn trees,
Or how the eyes mist in the morning breeze
Seeing a calf's new-born and shaky grace.
Forgotten how the sun-filled autumns hold,
Glowing and gold, earth's passion come to fruit;
The prairie's flowering and the hidden root
Are smothered deep in winter's snow and cold.
And yet our feet, for all we cannot sing,
Trample the winter down and move toward spring.

PORTRAIT OF A PROVINCIAL

Two great mountain ranges separated her
From all she longed to do and be.
Some called them Rockies Appalachians;
Others imagined them Marriage and Motherhood.
Alone and honest in the deep night
She named them truly: Ignorance and Incapacity.

Harriet Seymour Popowski

CLEORA BECOMES A DAKOTAN

Cleora rose and shivered, looking out
Across the prairie where the cottonwoods
Whipped to the frenzied flapping of the wind.
"If only the wind would stop," she said. "Back east
In Saugatuck the dogwood is in bloom.
And in that riot of pink the rambling walls
Wander off to the haze, and over the earth
A blessed silence rests. Here the wind
Is never done with blowing, day or night.
I shall go crazy listening, I think."

Old Man Martin shifted his fresh eggs
In their straw basket to the other knee,
And his tobacco to the other cheek
As the wind came tearing at the kitchen pane.
"Well," he said, "I heard 'em tellin' now
About a farm here in Dakoty once
Where the wind stopped blowin' one summer's day
And all the chickens fell down, plumb flat. Yes Ma'am.
They leaned 'em up against the chicken shed
Till they got their sten'th and bearin's back, I guess.
Take me now. I grew up back east — Vermont;
But I lived here a long time and y'know
You don't hear the wind after while or mind it much.
The missus used to say them early years
It'd blowed every day but one since we folks come,
And that was the day of the kite contest. Not one
Of them durned things'd get off the ground a mite."
Cleora laughed and paid for her fresh eggs,
And Old Man Martin hobbled off toward town
Fighting the streaming wind with every step.
"You don't hear the wind after while . . . or mind it . . .
much . . ."

Harriet Seymour Popowski

A POET'S PRAYER

O You who write on storm-filled sky
And sing through wind-touched tree, and cry
With every wild bird song to me,
O One of Perfect Artistry,
Help me to voice my songs, to know
Creation's pain, achievement's glow.

Deliver me from stupid praise
Of soft, inconsequential days;
Keep me alert, with honest sight
To see and transmit life's delight;
But may I shape a mightier song
To fight earth's tragedy and wrong.

Oh, let me not be satisfied
With pretty words and easy pride!
May I go hungry down my days
For keener thought and sharper phrase.
Give me a larger heart, and then
The power to write strong words. Amen.

EPICUREAN CONTEMPLATION OF FEEDING EUROPE

"O give us daily bread," the hungry moan;
And we whose scraps would be for them a feast
Toss salad greens, turn fragrant roasts — too prone
To push those haunting pictures from our eyes;
The helpless, caught in Hitler's enterprise.
Feed them, we pray, but not with food alone . . .
Still may they hunger till the stirring yeast
Of righteousness through every land is known.
— And so feed us, with more than golden pies!
— And so fill us, with more than alibis!

Harriet Seymour Popowski

LOVELY THINGS

I've seen so many lovely things in life,
Lovely, unforgettable things:
Birds soaring high
With sunlight on their wings,
A wooded glen at morn,
And violets wet with pearly dew,
A dainty brook, a shallow pool
Edged with iris, stately, blue,
Gray-misted hills beyond
A wide-spread field of golden grain,
A silver maple with head uplifted
In summer's cleansing rain,
Departing day spilling its hoard
Of crimson, gold, and purple hue;
But lovelier than all these . . .
My baby's trusting eyes of blue.

GRIEF

I thought that I had conquered grief
At Spring's returning; I had filled my life so full
Of work and play, that I had no time
To feel the heart strings pull;
And then today I came to stand beneath a plum-tree,
Lovely, white; I could not speak — I could not see.

TREES

Along the ocean trail,
Trees, patterned by the lusty winds,
Stand bent and strangely mute,
Like men grown tired — and old too young.

Josephine Preszler

MAGNIFICENT REFLECTION

When first we met, our sun crossed the plane
of the earth's equator, not making night and
day all over the earth of equal length, but
giving me an eternal day.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD

It is a scene of the years ago,
Of a homestead one would scarcely know,
Since time has clouded things with gray,
And youth has faded quite away.

I well recall its orchard fair,
The lake, the oaks, its jaunty air;
But no such picture now to see,
Things are not as they used to be.

I'd almost doubt, did I not know,
That lovely place there years ago;
Yet, well the landmarks bear the name,
As writ, thereon, are just the same.

In memory, from the doorway there,
Come greetings from my mother's chair.
I bow in reverence before her face,
As no other love can take her place.

There were no rings on her toiling fingers;
On her wrist was no glittering band,
But dearer than diamonds and rubies
Was the touch of her loving hand.

Claude Emery Ranney, Baltic

LIFE, MORE LIFE!

Sunrise over western rolling hills,
Autumn crispness,
It thrills me,
It fills me
With thankfulness for being alive.

Church spire over the western rolling hills,
Pointing heavenward,
It thrills me,
It fills me
With thankfulness for hope of lasting life.

ETHEREAL CHOIR

There is magic in the tree-tops:
A Black-robed choir is holding sway;
It sings of brooks and flowers
As southward it takes its way.

Merry, warbling blackbirds,
We love your glad refrain;
We'd like another concert
When you are north again.

Samilena Rasmussen

BREAKFAST
(In a City Hotel)

Shining silver, satin damask,
Shaded lights, a radio,
Tinkling ice, the morning paper,
Ten or twenty deft and dapper
Waiters running to and fro.

Through an open kitchen window
Fifteen hundred miles away
The Dakota sun is shining,
Honeysuckle vines a-twining
In the morning breeze's sway.

There's a mist across the menu —
Let me leave this alien place,
I am homesick for a cozy
Prairie kitchen and a posy
In a little crystal vase.

(From *Better Homes & Gardens Magazine*)

REDBIRD

Bury me shallow or bury me deep,
I shall awake when the redbird sings.
His lively whistle will pierce my sleep
A thousand and one returning springs.

Deep, down deep and out of sight,
The stirless dark surrounding me,
I shall follow his flashing flight
Through the lanes of eternity.

When April drips from the window ledge,
When South Wind fashions madrigals,
Wait for me by the lilac hedge —
I shall come back when the redbird calls.

(From *Frontier & Midland*)

Mabel K. Richardson



Southern State Normal School

SPRINGFIELD, SOUTH DAKOTA

*Where the dark Missouri washes golden South Dakota's plain,
Stands our honored Alma Mater—may her glory never wane!
With her walls of tinted jasper rising straight and proud and high,
With the flag we love above her, bright against the evening sky.*

Chorus:

*Raise the chorus till it echoes from the blue Nebraska hills,
Till the rushing old Missouri with our music swells and thrills!
Lift the anthem o'er the prairie, westward towards the setting sun;
We will praise thee, Southern Normal, till thy last brave fight is won!*

*Far and wide, thy sons and daughters pass along the torch of light
Kindled at thy glowing altar, ever giving, ever bright,
Thousands strong they love and praise thee; honor, cherish and defend;
With united hearts and voices, love and praise thee to the end.*

By MARION MILLER and NINA TREGO



South Dakota State College

BROOKINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA

*We come from the Sioux and Missouri,
The Cheyenne and the Jim,
From the pine-clad hills of the Black Hills,
Brim full of vigor and vim.
We sing the song of the prairie,
The home of the Yellow and Blue,
The gleaming gold of the corn field,
The flax of azure hue.*

REFRAIN

*Oh, S.D.S.C.,
Hurrah for the Yellow and Blue;
Oh, S.D.S.C.,
All honor and glory to you!
Forever raise the song,
In praise both loud and long,
With loyal hearts and true,
Oh, loyal hearts and true!*

Words by PROF. N. E. HANSEN
Music and Refrain by PROF. F. J. HAYNES

DAKOTA SUNSETS

Winter

Violet light, unheralded,
Suddenly over the landscape spills.
There's a purple roof on the cattle shed,
And lilac snow on the pasture hills.

Spring

After the cleansing April shower
The sun goes down in an opal sea;
Quivering blade and budding flower
Sparkle with rainbow jewelry.

Summer

There's a crimson belt in the western sky,
Glint on resting plow and harrow;
Pride and promise of bright July —
We shall have fair weather tomorrow.

Autumn

Saffron sky and yellow leaves,
Amber haze as nights turn cold,
Burnished stubble and ripened sheaves —
Golden sun on autumn gold.

O splendid sun! In change the same!
We turn to watch you slip from sight,
Signing off in a flare of flame,
Wishing a prairie world "Good-night."

HUNTER

Now from the river he returns,
The bright bird swinging from his shoulder.
High pride upon his brown cheek burns,
Lengthened his stride, his laughter bolder.

The wild wind-loving broken wing
Fearlessly on his stout arm lies.
This is a strange disturbing thing
That leaves a shadow on his eyes.

(From *Poetry* — *Chicago*)

Mabel K. Richardson

MISSOURI RIVER

Here is a river that riots its way
From mountain slope down to the sea.
Ditches nor dikes nor embankments can stay
The will of this stream to run free.

Old time trappers through months of travel
Watched its turbulent course.
Pioneers stood on its banks to marvel
The uncontrollable force.

Prairie lands have been tamed by the plow
And turned to the use of man,
But "Old Big Muddy" — who can tell how
To curb the rage of its flood-time span?

*

"Smoky Water" runs unconcerned
With schemes of man or devil.
Tangled riddles and theories learned
Are for men to unravel.
Only one urge — as old as time —
Flows with the silt and sand and grime —
Water will seek its level.

(From *Sioux City Journal*)

(* Smoky Water — Indian name for Missouri)

FOR YOUTH VICTORIOUS

(1945)

The returning march
Leads not to rest.
When guns are hushed
And the last bomb hurled
The battle smoulders.

In peace as in war
Victorious youth
Will rouse to find
The weight of the world
Upon their shoulders.

Mabel K. Richardson

OF SONG — AND THE LISTENER

Song — that is born of high moments,
When Time's mate, Eternity, calls,
Has always profundity present;
Yet profundity galls
Such listeners as too lightly go
Into Song's wood, too lightly, tip-toe.

There has been *Song*, profound, yet *so true*
One must catch the fathering note
Of Eternity's passion, beating high — higher —
Demanding Love's own throat
To be tossing it — *bread*, to the hungry crowd
Sitting silent, enraptured — bowed.

Plain Mary is present — listening
With Joseph who, daytimes, shapes wood —
Mary's eyes lift — glance into Joseph's own,
And those two share such good
As Eternity shapes for listeners
With lives simply profound as theirs.

MUST I?

Must I be poor — humbled?
Must I be broken?

Yes, little brothers of Jesus —
The world needs fresh token!

Many the great — the proud,
Many the moneyed;
Gall was on his tongue —
Must my bread be honeyed?

Must I be poor?
Must I be broken?

"Whom the Lord loves
He chastens." *Love* has spoken.

Flora Shufelt Rivola

THE BRINGERS

*I stood, a watcher upon Time's wall, and I saw
The Bringers coming with the new day's dawn.*

It had been how dark! All through the night
I heard the bell of Fate toll out the hours;
While in its darker dungeons Life spun thin
The fragile threads of hope.
The Bringers were, though motley-minded men,
Each careful workman; each had sought out where
New light lay waiting, and each had brought
His ray from out the tangled skein — world — thought.
Each one looked weary, but their brows were fair;
And some were merry — still.

Far back of each brave Bringer I discerned
Women upon worn knees — with tired backs;
Farther, beyond, there trailed great, grey tracks
Which led to dawn-ways dreaming fitfully below
The crest of any hill.

The Bringers neared; I caught their voices. One said:
“This day we bring will be a better one;
No more the sun will rise blood-red with war — for men
Have found what way Hell's hot bombs burn — internally,
Their makers with their foes — worming the souls
From out spent bodies, left to breathe — though dead.”

His mate replied: “Many a brave one died
Shaping this light to lay it where our hands might lift
The precious stuff to bring men this day's gift!”
His great eyes were bereft.

I, hearing, fell upon my face there on Time's wall —
In gratitude for Bringers!

Suddenly my hushed voice lifted; *one must sing —
Light is a lovely thing!*

Flora Shufelt Rivola

TIMELESS RENDEZVOUS

I came away, dear home-spot, not from pique,
But from that further urge — which makes man seek
For new trails still; I came away,
But hard, dear, testing *prairie-ways*, one day
I know, without a doubt, I shall return
To watch your death-denying sunsets burn.

One day I shall ride Pegasus — his mane
Wild in the wind — *Rapid to Chamberlain*,
Whose bridge across Missouri will bear up
These homing feet.

I'll drink the stirrup-cup
As I alight, at length, in Yankton, where
I still keep wealth-of-spirit banked; —
(For intangibles in coffers God be thanked):

In Yankton, South Dakota: It was there
Love found me, on a moon-mad night like this;
Planted upon my lips the nameless kiss —
(God knows its passion is both bliss and pain):
Oh, yes, Dakota, I shall come again,
For there upon a western hillside waits
My constant lover!

This heart palpitates
Just to be wording it, shall come, shall ride,
Dismount — to lie down thankfully beside
That eager dust, while two hearts newly blend
To glow, a point of light, without an end.

II

A grave can guard a sunset — *after dark*;
To flame in majesty — beyond our hill;
Beloved, down these darkling ways one Spark
Has guided, and will guide, my way until
The matchless Mount, you *taught my flesh to ride*,
Shall bear me safely to your spirit's side.

Flora Shufelt Rivola

NEWTON EDMUNDS
(Territorial Governor, 1863-1866)

We passed through the clustering hills that buttress the mountain
wall,
And one was the mate of his fellow and we said, "How alike are
all!"
But when we crossed the vale and turned from the opposite
height,
Above its mate one hoary peak loomed high in majestic might.

We passed through the busy multitude of earnest, ambitious men,
And one was the mate of his fellow and all were alike to our ken;
But we crossed the Valley of Time; from the heights beyond
the creek
We measured the men again, and one was a mountain peak.

Doane Robinson
Custodian Historical Library, 1856-1946

MEMORIES THAT LINGER

I started on a trip at five today —
Tail end of night.
I watched the dim horizon take first ray
Of morning light.
The brilliance of the morning star gave me
A peaceful feeling of security,
As if to say this brand new day would be
In all, just right.

And then, as clouds reflected morning sun
And painted there
A picture artists never yet have done,
I came aware
Of thrills that filled my heart with pure delight;
And watching nature's beauty at its height
I wished for power to stay this peaceful sight
And keep it there.

And yet too soon those clouds became a threat
Of storms ahead,
As if in anger now for having let
Such beauty spread
Upon the earth to start a day anew,
They quickly settled down to hide from view
All trace of early morning's sun-kissed blue —
Begetting dread.

But still that morning beauty sweetly clung,
Just like a prayer
Within my heart or joyous anthem sung
God's wonders to declare.
Though sullen clouds so ruthlessly defaced
The coloring with which they had been graced,
The picture in my mind was not erased,
But lingered there.

C. D. Rollins

TWO SONNETS IN SEASON

If I seem eager for your least embrace
And lick the lees of your most casual kiss,
There is a reason for my thrifty pace;
A providence provokes this avarice.
For, being country-bred, I heed the way
The farmers, in the midst of plenty, glean
The fertile fields against another day
When vintage will be scarce and harvest lean.
And so I garner in my skull the lines
Your looming shoulders form, the fragile touch
Of fingertips, the most minute designs
Of you that would not seem to count for much —
Lest I be forced, in future famishing,
To grub for roots around some dusty spring.

You think to hold me with such slender threads? —
These tendril words, these counsels tenuous
As larkspur smoke? Your metaphysics spreads
A web indelible as frost. Ingenuous
You prove in loving me, when you proceed
To weave a circling lariat from strands
Too finespun for my ways. This filagreed
And flimsy noose, this tether, in your hands
Is no restraint. Somewhere someone, at last,
With easy come-by words and ways, will bind
This flesh, recalcitrant as yet, and cast
A stringent net about this restive mind.
. . . You smile, knowing you weave effectively
The fragile fetters of captivity.

Virginia Rozum

I AM THE LAST FRONTIER

I am the last frontier! Old Muddy swirls
At my front door; while, at the back, tall pines
Climb high against sheer stone, where crystal brooks
Leap down in ecstasy. I bide between
These wide-flung doors, untouched by lust and greed.

When man surged west in search of gold his eyes
Were blind to richer lodes that lay beneath
His feet, in fertile soil and lush, sweet grass.
My sweep of plain was scorned as he trekked by . . .
My heart, warm as the tropics it once knew,
Rejoiced . . . Years came and went . . . My glory grew.

When man no longer had another west,
I called. And when he came, I tried his soul!
My winter winds, like sobs torn from dry throats,
Harrassed him. Blazing suns denied him rest. —
To him who braved the trial, I gave the strength
Of mighty winds — divine serenity
Of deeps that yesterday submerged the land —
A wisdom born of oneness with the earth.
I lent him power to hear the silence speak,
And trained his vision for horizons wide
With challenge. Tall he rose to meet my faith.
Through him, my need to succor life prevailed.

His herds, all sleek with fatness of the plains,
Now feed a weary world . . . As hungry hands
Reach out, the fingers of a universe
Are at my pulse. They feel the ageless beat
Of LIFE within my core. My blood transfused
Into their veins, redeems lost souls, through whom
I am, for all time, now immortalized!

MIST AT DAWN

Drouth-stricken was my heart; but now, the pain
Is lost in cleansing tears . . . Once more I gain
The sanctity of telling beads in church,
Through rain, slow-dripping from a silver birch.

Elma Scheel

LEAVING THE PLAINS IN OCTOBER

When I am far away, and time stands still,
Please, Lord, let me remember, all my days,
These tall red grasses on a smoky hill,
And golden-glow against a purple haze.
Please let me keep the joy akin to pain,
Of dusk-sweet trails where opal dewdrops lie;
And see in dreams the long, wide sweep of plain
Where flames of glory kiss the western sky.
Imprint the silence of the twilight's hush
Upon my heart, and let me drink the wine
Of cool, clear dawns; while through my soul may rush
A tenderness for these dear plains of mine.
Please let me store these treasured gems today,
To fill the years when I shall be away.

TO FOLKS UPON MY STREET

My street is just the nicest one in town!
Oh, no, I don't mean mansions up and down
Its length, or unimportant things like that!
But where the neighbors take out time to chat,
And where the houses radiate good cheer,
And mean just everything that one holds dear.
Here, love is lived through simple tasks each day,
And not *put on* in company sort of way.
The worn spots on each threshold deeper grow
By feet more eager to return, than go.
When stars are hung against the sky's blue dome,
Dear lights reach out to call wayfarers home . . .
As night broods down, and circles are complete,
Please, God, stay near to folks upon my street.

PASSING PIONEER

Fling wide the sash and let him face the West!
For him this last adventure holds no fears.
In life, he met and weathered every test,
So let him go the way of PIONEERS.

Elma Scheel

SONNET TO PIONEERS

You wheeled out West and reared yourselves a home
Square-piled of sod torn from the Mother Earth —
Strong storehouse for Life's garnered pain and mirth . . .
Staunch hearts crooned softly to the fertile loam,
As stubborn furrows rose and fell. The dome
Of prairie sky hung close that it might girth
Your flagging hearts with strength to bear the dearth
Of fruitage. Thus, when drouth warned you to roam,
And hardships tired your souls, you inched down deep,
Strong tap-roots far below the drouth of things,
And courage flowed to conquer all your fears!
Your lives were hard? Indeed! . . . But should we weep?
For now, your virile blood triumphant sings
Through veins of MEN — *your sons, O Pioneers!*

MOONLIGHT OVER THE BLACK HILLS

The velvet skies star-spangle lofty pines,
While a full moon swings high and gently shines
Like *glory* on each stony crag and peak.
But darkness hovers down below, and lines
Each cavern with depressing chill and gloom,
That haunts one like a gaunt, rapacious tomb.
This black and silver seen from Harney's height,
Is woven fantasy on some huge loom,
Where eerie fingers pluck the magic threads.
The tension is so great, one almost dreads
To listen to the hush, lest he might hear
The click of shuttle drawing ebon shreds
Of woof between the hoary warp . . . The sky
Flings back the echo of a night-bird's cry,
To choke within the listener's aching throat.
Up here, at night, the heart cannot deny
A Master Mind has planned these awesome thrills.
Eternal beauty, chaste and sweet, fulfills
The need of man. Up here, he finds his God
In lonely splendor of the moon-capped Hills.

Elma Scheel

DAKOTA ROADS

Dakota roads are straight. They lie between
The verdant squares of prairie sun and sod.
Sunflowers spill their gold on either side
A living lesson of one Love, one God.
Dakota roads are straight. They lie between
The sectioned land to form a perfect square.
A Master Pattern of linoleum.
In green and gold is growing everywhere.

THE GIFT

His altar was as blue as skies are blue
On summer days. The heat of noonday burned
The incense from a million fragile cups.
The farmer stood alone, his face upturned
As if in reverent, humble gratitude,
He offered Him the best gift that he knew,
This flowering field, where small, winged choristers
Chanted their praises while alfalfa grew.

BAPTISM

She stood before the altar, lithesome, young,
The lilies in their baskets seemed to nod
Approval as she lifted up her babe
To dedicate his life with hers to God.
The Easter morning sun, through windows stained
With red and purple bordering a square
Of amber light, poured upon her head.
I fancied I could see a halo there.

TIME WITHOUT YOU

The hours of daylight woven as a net
Drag slowly laden with the tasks I do
To lose themselves in night's star-studded maze
Of dreams in which I find my way to you.

Edna Weaver Sanden

MEETING YOU

Suddenly you stood before me,
Very straight and tall,
Where you came from, what your name was
Mattered not at all.
Music moved us close together
In a world our own.
I have never dared to ask you
How you, too, had known.

NO COMPROMISE

I've made my peace with winter time
Beside an open fire;
I've run away from springtime's fervent
Flaunting of desire.
The summer now no longer hurts
When roses climb the wall.
I gather nuts alone on hills
We used to climb each fall.
In winter, springtime, summer, fall,
I find I'm still surprised
At needing you; and that, my dear,
Cannot be compromised.

STRANGE MUSIC

My fantasy of twilight edged with stars
Has purple shadows paling to night blue
With colored fingers of the sunset playing
A symphony from memories of you.

RESPONSIBILITY

My heart is such a fragile thing
To bear unceasingly
This precious gift of love for you
Into eternity.

Edna Weaver Sanden

WILLOW MAGIC

There is a graceful willow tree
That grows beside my garden fence;
Its lacy branches sway and bend
With air of proud magnificence.

I seem to see a lovely girl
Who dances gaily in the sun;
She swirls her skirts the whole day long
But bows in prayer when day is done.

MY GARDEN

I have a quiet place to spend my hours
Alone. My garden is a bit of green;
Here grow lilies, tulips and summer flowers;
And iris, daisies, roses too, are seen;
A pool where goldfish play, birds bathe and preen.
I work in peace, my troubles I discard;
It seems that here all nature is serene.
I love to spend my time, my joy unmarred,
Within this peaceful plot of ground in my backyard.

GOLDEN BLOOM

I yearn to write some poetry,
And hope to find the time today;
For yesterday I mowed my lawn
And tossed the dandelions away.

But now, with saucy, daring pose,
Again they beckon from the yard,
Instead of writing pretty verse . . .
I'll weed my floral boulevard.

Mary Elizabeth Scholtz

SOUTH DAKOTA'S BADLANDS

(Where a million years are but a day)

Here lie rare fossils locked for ages fast
In sand. Here Nature flaunts a weird design
In rainbow hues, — a pageantry divine . . .
The earth's terrific struggles in the past
Have left these monuments. But Time can blast
Archaean walls — wild winds' deep furrows twine
Around the Pinnacles, and undermine
The crypt that holds some crumbling fossil's cast, —

For here, once, monsters lashed their tails in kill . . .
But with the tropic storms and floods on land
All life was buried deep in clay and sand . . .
Then winter — eons long — and glacial still —
A miracle! Now lovely sunsets gleam
And soft rains drench, while silent Badlands dream.

THE ROSE SYMBOL

As Omar walked within the garden close
He pondered over ethics . . . truth . . . belief . . .
Then thoughtfully he plucked a full blown rose
And watched the petals fall, in pensive grief.

Emma Thomas Scoville

AUTUMN TWILIGHT

Sunset with all its flame of gold and red
Has slowly turned to softer shades; a light
Wind stirs the leaves on trees that have held tight.
The horses whinner, anxious to be fed
Their oats and clover hay; high overhead
The first pale stars pin-prick the azure height;
A dog's bark breaks the barnyard drone of night
Anticipating meal of milk and bread.

The pastel colors die out of the west;
The pasture twinkles with the glowing fly
Where bullfrogs croak. The soft moon-rays are dim
As darkness spreads her slumber robe for rest.
The farmer lifts his eyes up to the sky
In awe at mysteries beyond earth's rim.

SOUTH DAKOTA'S BADLANDS

(The Haunt of the Dinosaur)

And these white fossils crumbling into dust
Once moved through tropic jungles near a pool,
Hug monsters fighting with a savage lust
To slake their thirst in water never cool.

Where vegetation grew so rank and strange,
They sweltered in the hot, young sun's fierce ray —
They saw the flash that split the black-sky range,
And heard the deluge break on their last day . . .

Catastrophes that life could not withstand: —
Clouds bursting bounds, with some dynamic press,
Till life was buried deep in clay and sand,
Then glacial winters swept the emptiness . . .
Where water wears earth's crusted sand away
Men find unique white fossils there today.

Emma Thomas Scoville



University of South Dakota

VERMILLION, SOUTH DAKOTA

*South Dakota, how dear to thy children thy
name,*

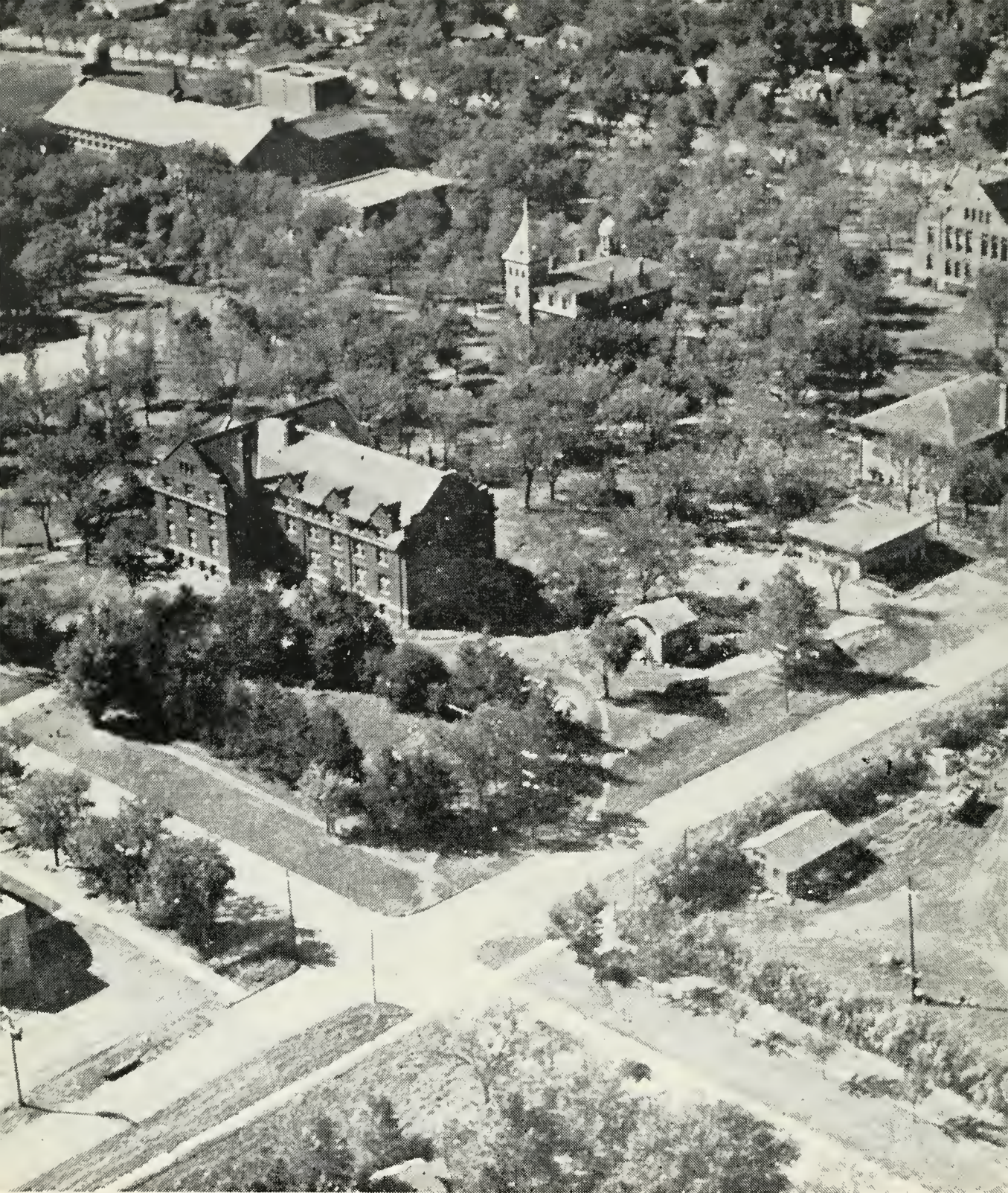
*How daring the tales oft retold;
Of thy builders who first to thy wilderness came;
Their's a glory that never grows old.
O the pine-crested peaks of storied Black Hills,
The Missouri that ribbons thy plain;
Where the slant summer sunshine so lavishly
spills
Over prairie and pasture and grain.*

*Alma Mater, Dakota, we drink thee a health
As we go from thy sheltering walls;
Younger feet shall come trooping to gather thy
wealth,*

*Younger voices shall ring through thy halls.
Keep us true to the type of the brave pioneer;
No hardship e'er daunted his quest;
Alma Mater, lead on to the untried frontier,
We follow the trail to the west.*

Words by MABEL A. RICHARDSON

Music by WINFRED R. COTTON



Yankton College
YANKTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

*Hail! Yankton College!
Noble and strong;
To thee, with loyal hearts,
We raise our song;
Swelling to heaven loud,
Our praises ring;
Hail! Yankton College!
To thee we sing!*

*Hail! Yankton College!
Guide of your youth,
Lead thou thy children on
To light and truth.
Thee, when death summons us,
Others shall praise.
Hail! Yankton College!
Thro' endless days.*

UNDER THE SOUR GUMS

I should have known before you went
That you would go, John Henry;
Shades — then the grim pall comes.
My real self knew, denied the message sent
That night we waded through the scarlet drifts
Under the sour gums.

How far you went, I heard your sighs,
But not for me, John Henry;
Pulse veered to battle hums,
Your feet had long trod levers in the skies;
Your thoughts were far from scarlet leaves
Under the sour gums.

My real self sensed the subtle strain
That you would go, John Henry;
Fall came with prescient sums,
Ill record that it would not come again
For you and me, though scarlet drifts piled high
Under the sour gums.

My real self knew before you went
That you would go, John Henry;
Subtly foreknowledge comes;
I walked with glutting steps, my mind much bent
Fate to disdain, that night we had our last walk
Under the sour gums.

What airy fields, what flowered lea,
Is your abode, John Henry?
Deeply this thought comes: what is death?
Almost your form I see
Watching with healthful glee
Havoc of wind and leaves
Under the sour gums.

Agnes Marie Serum

A WORK OF ART

The humming bird builds
A wee cup of a nest,
In a quiet woodland nook,
And saddles it
To a sloping branch
Hanging over a murmuring brook.
The outside is studded
With scales from buds
Imbedded in dull green moss,
Interwoven by the bird's sharp bill,
With threads of fine plant floss.
This cradle is lined
With thistle down
Or wool from the sycamore trees;
Held firmly in place
By spider's web
It is gently rocked by the breeze.

CURIOUS

I wonder what the squirrels would do
If every nut they buried . . . grew.
And can you tell me, do they know
They put them in so straight a row?
Do squirrels recall where caches are
Or do they sense them from afar?
If kernels sprouted . . . every one,
Do you think we'd ever see the sun?
These things are puzzling, I contend;
But now I have a furry friend
And hope to learn from him how he
So quickly found our walnut tree.

Blanche Severance

JUNE GRADUATE

Today he graduates, this boy
For eighteen summers mine;
With other members of his class
He passes me in line.

The gold stars in the service flag
Before me on the wall
Bring terror to my anxious heart
For what may yet befall.

On far off battlefields my eyes —
Closed tightly against tears —
See graves of other graduates
Of tender equal years.

White crosses stretch in rows — but stop!
He's coming down the aisle.
He must not see these tears and so
I dry my eyes and smile.

LILACS

Pale, lovely flower, wafting fragrance far;
Sweet waker of memories you are;
Of youth and love and graduation date
And handsome Galahad — my aging mate.
Of nights when, fleeing dormitory rule,
We wandered arm in arm at boarding school.
Dear blossoms, years of joy and pain you span.
At sight of you, I live romance again.

Lucy Sly

IN REQUIEM
(J. C. Lindberg)

He walked these stately halls, and now
These steps are strangely still;
Yes, when the quiet corridors
With lengthening shadows fill,
His presence, wrapped in memory —
Walks on!

SALVAGE

This is the price of dreaming,
The wail of the broken trust;
Ruthless feet! Tramp — Tramp — Tramp.
And high ideals went tumbling into dust.

This is the price of scheming,
And scars on a mended heart;
Ruthless feet; Tramp — Tramp — Tramp,
This armored wall — He'll never break apart.

Melba Hardt

CARPENTER TOOLS

Ralph got the building tools when grandpa died;
They gave me cows to milk and wheat to grow.
“Ralph’s like his grandpa was,” they said, and tried
To keep me happy on the farm. And, so
As years went by, I tried to do my part;
Endured the heat that made green wheatstalks wilt;
Each visit to my brother stung my heart
With talk of homes and structures he had built.

I fixed the fences where the cow lane went;
I drove the tractor and I cut the wheat;
And no one dreamed that in my discontent,
I smelled fresh lumber, heard the hammer’s beat.
My parents never guessed, and never knew,
My cherished wish to be like grandpa, too.

Jess Strader

CONSULTATION

April has been sulky,
April has been blue,
Politely cool toward me,
And downright rude to you.

We have talked it over,
The apple tree and I.
(Cock Robin strolling past
Suggested that we try.)

At our consultation
We Specialists on Spring
Made a diagnosis
That certainly should bring

Sanity to April.
Our plans are organized;
April must immediately
Be psychoanalyzed.

ONE MILE

Three days of rain have made our hillside farm a swamp.
One mile of prairie road runs down the hill,
Across the flat, and up the hill beyond.
That mile of road—black ribbon edged on either side with
grey—
Runs to the town, a hair appointment,
And an afternoon of bridge.
A mile—but what a mile!
Someone determined that a mile is 5,280 feet,
But someone did not say that each mile varies
With the hour and with the heart.
Today, a mile—a long, wet road
Between our doorstep and the sidewalks of the town—
Is the exact distance my patience can be stretched
And not be snapped!

Beryl Stewart

WHAT IS SPRING

When does spring come? And what is spring?
Some say it is the first wet snow
Across brown shards of winter months;
The wavering lines of green along a country road;
The crocus, scornful of the sun's soft warmth,
Purpling the cold, north slopes;
Red tractors ripping fields from dark cocoons of sleep;
The raucous call of pheasant cocks.
Each cock transmits the call
Until the sound encircles night
And holds its shadows close.

But I know spring has come
When lambs graze up the valley
In the morning sun.
They run and jump,
Playing a kind of leapfrog known to lambs.
At last they snuggle down in one small group.

Spring is a nest of lambs upon a warm hillside.

INTRUSION

I thought that life was over,
That blue grass and white clover
Should grow above my head.
No bird could sing more clearly,
No flower would bloom more brightly
Than those when I were dead.

But Love walked through my garden
And said, "I beg your pardon —
May I stroll along this way?"
The lark was singing gaily,
The crocus bloomed most sweetly,
For Love had come to stay.

Beryl Stewart

BIG SIOUX

Syllables of water
Running to the sea,
Syllables of river
Rushing tirelessly,
Do you ever weary,
Restless water sounds,
With your endless chatter
Seldom out of bounds?

Muddy words of water,
You have much to say;
Is this the first time
You have passed this way?
Did your winding journey
Begin drop by drop?
Where and when your starting?
Will you never stop?

Why not pause and answer
Questions I have asked,
If only by a jumble
As syllables rush past?

IN A SONG

I saw him standing, long ago,
In rapt attention, head cocked so,
Listening to the melody
Of a small bird in a tree.

What can be in a small bird's song,
To hold this busy man that long?
Years have very swiftly passed,
Womanhood is mine at last.

Today a bird sang in our tree,
And the song plainly said to me,
"Glory be to God on high!
Sing His praise, the same as I."

Awake, I stand, head cocked so,
(The same as he, long years ago.)
Listening to the melody
Of a small bird in a tree.

Carmen Suurmeyer

PIONEER MOTHER

The cows have been milked, the chickens are fed,
The sheep and the oxen are safe in their shed;
On the back of the stove, the coffee is hot,
The corn-mush bubbles and steams in the pot,
The lamp is trimmed and ready to light —
Your father is late in coming tonight.
(Children, listen, hush your prattle —
We might hear the wagon rattle.)

Your father will bring from the County Seat
Stockings and shoes to warm your feet,
A hood of wool to warm my head,
A barrel of meal, and flour, for bread.
(The cellar is full of garden-stuff
But winter is coming and that's not enough.)

He'll bring a wagon-load of coal:
When storm-winds blow and snow-clouds roll,
Cobs and cow-chips and twists of hay
Will never keep the cold away.
But best of all, he will not fail
To bring letters from home. *He will bring the mail.*

Listen, children! Now, I hear
The rattle of wheels and a whistle clear
And loud across the night.
Quick, light the lamp. He must see the light.
The rattling wheels are coming near.
Children! Children! Your father is here!

Nellie Burch Tennant

THE BIJOU HILLS

I saw a place where God's great hand
Had traced a river, muddy and rough,
Through rocky walls and shifting sand,
Through widened plain and grassy bluff.

I saw a place where God had been —
And reared a chain of stony hills,
Where wily coyotes mate and den,
Where rattlesnake his poison spills.

I saw a place where God's great hand
Had washed the plains with colors gay,
With sea-green grass and yucca plant,
With purple pasque and sagebrush gray.

I saw a place where God had been
And lured the seeking pioneers,
Who were the worst and best of men,
Who sweat and toiled through raw, hard years.

I saw a place where God's great hand
Had helped to build a holy place,
Where men might worship in this land,
Where groping hearts sought fresh'ning grace.

This, too, I saw, that God remained;
He could not leave this world He wrought,
For men and earth must be maintained
With hallowed hands and prayerful thought.

Elsie M. Thrall

DAKOTA WINTER

Winter — Gentle winter:
Snowflakes petal-soft,
Skies gold and blue, a lovely hue;
“Nothing bad about this,” I scoffed.

Winter — Snappy winter:
Temperatures way below,
Cheeks frozen white, sun-dogs each night,
“Now if only that wind won’t blow.”

Winter — Windy winter:
From every direction it comes.
Things rattle and squeak; the winds howl and shriek;
“How that frosty phone wire hums.”

Winter — Raging winter:
Flying snow to fulfill our worst fears,
Can’t see the sun, visibility — none!
“The worst blizzard we’ve had for years.”

Winter — Vengeful winter:
The havoc you wrought was complete;
Highways all blocked, each building snow locked,
“That drift is at least eighteen feet.”

Winter — Conquered winter:
Spring will finally drive you away.
Though you rave and roar, better days are in store
“For I heard running water today.”

HOME AGAIN

In the plane I wrote on the flight-kit cards,
“How I wish you were here!”
Added some other items and
Sent them to friends far and near.
Beautiful views of scenery read,
“Wish you could be here, too.”
And I really meant the time-worn phrase
Each time I saw something new.
But now my journey’s completed.
There are no views of mountain or foam,
And my penny post-cards simply read,
“I’m very glad to be home.”

Edna Tystad

I FOUND DAKOTA

I found Dakota on a day as evening sent high color up the west,
A land of sky and earth and sun and wind,
Always the wind.

I found Dakota, found a place as lone as I,
And yet as hungering to lay hold, to call its own.
Its own it had: old men who knew the oxcart and the snows
Before I lived, young girls and
Farm boys and the ones who came
Not long ago and could not get away.

I found the wind
That tore and ripped at all that came —
The wind was always there,
The trees moved always,
Only, when at night the stillness of its absence
Made the heart wait till it should begin —
The trees were few and gold that autumn, far about the stream
 called 'river',
And the rolling ground to east was called 'the hills'.
Here was so little beauty held so dear
That hearts long fed on other worlds
Sank on the ashes of futility
And prayed,
"Oh, God, take me away
Before I love it as these others do!"

For some would tell of harvests —
That was long before the drought —
And money, and fat stock, and painted barns —
And rains, and few rains,
And wind, always the wind,
And dust, and fewer rains,
And grasshoppers,
And dust, and fewer rains,
And fewer trees, and leaner stock,
And warping barns,

And sun-cracked land.
With hush in voice one said,
“We had the crops!”
Another, “Can the land come back?”
Another, for them all, “It always has!”

I found Dakota, and the rain fell on too-thirsty land.
The sky was blue, too searing in its blueness,
And the trees were never still, where trees were found.
With winter there was snow and wind —
Always the wind —
The snow went whirling, swooping through the air,
But should the eyes look upward,
There was sky, blue, and the snow in air,
Mysterious, sourceless, whirling in the wind.
Sometimes the nights were silent, still as ice beneath the foot.
Then skies were dark, and to the north dull lights
Would hover, disappear, and come again
From where?
Then many voices told
Of hardship, cattle with lean ribs,
And trees cut down for family fires.
Futility and hopelessness rode with the dust and wind —
But they will come again, those other days,
And this is glorious land to those whose land it is!

“Oh, God, take me away
Before — !”

One day, and it was Easter Monday,
We went out to gather pasque flowers on the hills —
The hills! —
And I found mountains in my soul before I could return.
We climbed the dry slopes, bristling with old weeds;
A thousand furry flowers of lavender
Covered the ground, soon filled our hands.
The joy of living growth, the warm sun,
And a stirring wind filled up the heart.
On up the slope I climbed, it was a hill,

And at the top the rounding land
Spread eastward, barren,
Full of sweep and rise.
Here might have been a stream one day.
The ground stretched down away from me dull tan,
Then rust, and black, and where
It curved up from the groove below
There was a grey, deep purple.
But two folds away a hill was orange under straw-white weeds.

The sky was blue, the sun was warm,
The wind blew back my hair,
And all the world I had within me.
“Oh, God —”

“It will come back,” a man said.
He lived once in a sod house and saw the past I could not know.
“Perhaps not in our lifetime,
But it’s bound to come!”

“Oh, God —”
I found Dakota.

Elizabeth Daffan Van Kirk

COMFORT

Lovely evening took my heart,
Wrapped me with her ebbing light,
Held me close — against the night.

Day was but a passing tear,
Eternal oneness drew me near,
Vast-enveloping quietude, —
With peace and healing calm, embued.

Lovely evening took my heart,
Wrapped me with her ebbing light,
Held me close — against the night.

APART

I built with wondrous, precious care,
A fair and solid place;
The fresh-green earth was round about
And I could see afar.
And so I built in happiness,
My mind upon a star.

And then the earth was barren
And empty was the sky,
No light came through the shadow
Between the sun and I!

Lead me from my shadow's length,
Beyond its sunless hem;
I hear Their laughter in the light;
I would build with Them.

EARLY FALL

The cool wind of tomorrow
Blows across the shimmering heat
Of the full, green, fields of summer.

Olivia Vaughn

DREAMS

I watched the sun rise over the hill
And the cloud tints fade away;
And I said to myself, "I will go with the sun —
I will ride the winds —
I will taste the seas' salt spray."

So I left the cottage under the hill
And I wandered even as I had dreamed; —
The werewolf's howl, the gremlin's chuckle,
The deserts' thirst and the sting of the sea —
Of such were dreams for me.

I've known the Horn in fog and storm —
The Arab's tent and Egypt's sphinx —
The pyramids — those ancient tombs —
The igloo and the whale —
The howdah's sway, the tiger's charge —
The stars of an arctic night —
Grim fear and beauty side by side —
And the death of a pal at night.

I've broken a path in the wilderness;
I've spanned the river's gorge;
I've flown "the Hump" and over the plains;
I've sweated it out in a "pig boat's" charge; —
And these are the things that are old to me.

I've lived them all —
A thousand years in the space of a single day.
And out of it all has come no peace
Nor any sweet content.

So now I am back in the land I love
And the peace is mine which the soil can give; —
The balm of the shade of a leafed out tree —
The tug of a bass that has taken the fly —
The whirr of a pheasant's wings —
A child's gay laugh and a mother's smile —
The joy of work and the fun of play.

These are the things that are in my heart —
The things of my dreams to-day.

—*Lerna D. Veling*

TO RAGGEDY ANN OF THE GARDEN

There's a beautiful spot in my window —
It's you, little Raggedy Ann;
Your colors rival the rainbow
Whose glories the heavens span.

Your leaves are all curly and graceful,
Their edges gleam green in the light;
The centers are varied and brilliant
As a pheasant shows plumage in flight.

Soon you'll be filling my window
As new-fashioned leaves you unfold;
I hope I can keep you this winter
Away from the frost and the cold.

You're one little spot of the beauty
God has given us here on this earth.
As we view His abundance in nature
We know how priceless its worth.

A TEACHER'S PRAYER

A group of bright little youngsters
Are under my care each day;
My task is to guide and help them
To better choose their way;
For the paths are many and varied,
That will beckon them before long,
I must guide them in their studies,
Guide their laughter, play, and song;
And also be watchful, patient,
To build characters firm and strong.

Margaret E. Venne

NIGHT

Now Night sits on his heaven throne
And draws his monk-like robes around;
All through the pine-spiced hours, alone,
He prays, with softly murmured sound.
His back is bent, his face is old
With shadows and with cloudy scars,
And many are the prayers he's told
Upon his rosary of stars.

SONNET TO THE BIG SIOUX

If I could only walk beside you now
As you awake to springtime's breathless call,
Beloved stream! There, on your waters, fall
The first reflections of the budded bough,
And there the yellow finch, amid the sough
Of arching ash, with song enraptures all.
Across the fields, where droning tractors crawl,
An earthly fragrance rises from the plough.

I used to watch upon your wooded shore
The willows idly swishing emerald lace —
The wild grape vines that made a magic door
Before each wee, secluded sylvan space,
And there it was, with youth's blithe greed for more
I'd sit and day-dream of some other place.

Audree Visser

'TIS OFTEN SO

I walked out in the forest
And saw the green trees swaying,
I heard a gentle murmur
And knew that they were praying;
I ran out on the meadow
And watched the daisies dancing,
I saw their graceful movement
The hymns of God enhancing;
I sat down in tall churches
With holy altars blazing,
And saw the ladies' veiled eyes
Their neighbors' hats appraising.

MEN!

When we are dressing for dinner "out"
Dad's sure to sputter and fume about —
"Where in blazes are my spats and tie?!"
Until we all to his rescue fly.
Then, in the shirt and the tie we found,
In gloves we brought and all shod and crowned
In shoes we shined and the hat we brushed,
He goes downstairs, momentarily hushed.
A minute passes, and several more —
Pop with his watch now comes to the door,
"It's time to leave! What delays you so?
Why, *I* was ready an hour ago!"

Audree Visser

SERVICE WITH A SMILE

There lives and works in a small cafe
A girl whom I saw on a shopping day.
Is she plump or lithe or tall?
Or is her stature small —
I do not know.
What is the color of her hair
I cannot say; perhaps it's fair.
Are her eyes blue, green or brown?
I am not sure; for when I sat down
In the dark-stained booth,
This girl, I believe her name is Ruth,
Said "Hello! What will it be?"
And I looked up — to see
 That beautiful smile!
If you were to ask me how she looks,
This girl who serves and sometimes cooks,
I'd say, "Oh, she has the nicest smile
And she dresses in teen-age style,
She has dimples in her cheeks,
Her voice is pleasant when she speaks —
'Fifteen, twenty-five, fifty! Thank you!'" I didn't see
If it were correct; for she was smiling again at me
That beautiful smile!

IF WE COULD SPEAK

We whose bones lie beneath this sod,
Where proud spruce grow and bluebells nod,
Have journeyed, like the setting sun,
Beyond the dim horizon, our labors done.
Today, your solemn "Taps" we do not hear,
Nor note bowed heads, the tears so near,
For we have traveled long and far
And now behold the dazzling morning star.
Death, my friends, was not the end;
We dwell eternally where angel voices blend
In songs of adoration and saints are gathered round
The throne of Him who died, thorn-crowned.
Lay not then the choicest blossoms on our tombs;
Take some to shut-ins; brighten dismal rooms;
For we who have gone on before
Have all things beautiful on this celestial shore.

Esther L. Voller

WHEN DAY IS DONE

When day is done my dreams express
The longings in my loneliness —
My boy and girl are home again;
Son engineers his small toy train,
And daughter makes her doll a dress.
Once more I feel a sweet caress;
Reflection eases my distress.
These are the things that still remain
When day is done.
This is the sign of age, I guess,
And as I search my heart's recess,
It seems to echo love's refrain;
I now am back in lovers lane
With him whose love I still possess,
When day is done.

MOTHER

I cannot find words to express
Your beauty and your graciousness,
Your loving smile, your clear, gray eyes —
Your tender love I realize.

When things go wrong and I feel blue,
My thoughts go drifting back to you,
There are not words enough to praise
Your kindly deeds and loving ways.

So now I want to thank you, dear,
For mother love that's always near,
I thank God for your love so true,
And, Mother dear, I love you too.

Blanche A. Walters

I WANT TO BUILD A FRIENDLY HOUSE

I want to build a friendly house,
A home of joy and peace,
Where lives will pass harmoniously
And love will never cease.

I want to build a house where friends
Will find surcease from care,
A house where warmth and beauty blend,
For poor and millionaire.

I want to build a friendly house,
A cottage by the road,
Where sunbeams dance impetuously,
To lighten every load.

I want to build a sturdy place
That shelters from the storm,
A house that holds a smiling face
That time cannot transform.

STAN

One happy day life smiled on me,
The day I met you dear.
You bring the sunshine to my smile,
Whenever you are near.

Your boyish laughter brings me joy,
My heart is filled with love.
God blessed us with our girl and boy,
They're heaven from above.

So as we walk down life's highway,
May we forever be
Together while we journey on
To reach eternity.

Blanche A. Walters

WHY

Why does a brown tumble-weed
blowing before a cold north wind
across the frozen prairie fastness
clutch at my throat with fingers of steel,
twist my heart with half-remembered memories
and leave me with no words to tell
of love for my native land?

COGNIZANCE

White moon-flowers exhale fragrance to the white moon;
the white moon, encircled wide with phosphorescent stars
held timelessly within a Universe
of force-propelled precision — swirling worlds;
a moon whose beauty, through the centuries,
has come from sharing white-reflected light
drawn from an ageless sun — a sun shining —
shining now — at noon — half our little world away,
where eyes lift, above the ocean's blue,
and smile to see an opalescent rainbow-mist
haloing the eternal sun — the sun
irradiating light for pale white moons
to capture, hold a moment and reflect.
O illimitable Universe,
there is That which transcends
all the centuries of measured time,
and penetrates the boundaries
of unfathomable space.

LINCOLN

Lincoln the boy, the youth, the man;
Storied and pictured in his span of years.
How much of strength and courage can
We credit to the love of Ann — and tears —.

Thelma Hill Ward

AXIOMS

Plain Faith
Winter Evening
Loose Quilting
Three Axioms

PLAIN FAITH

I know of many signs of faith of Man,
As kneeling at an altar built to God,
But this sign shows both fervid faith and plan:
A harrow's tooth-marks in dry prairie sod.

Wings, A Quarterly of Verse

WINTER EVENING

The little shops about the town
Are resting with their eyelids down,
While little houses' eyes are wide
Expressing warmth and joy inside.

The Lantern Music in Miniature

LOOSE QUILTING

Still tender stays our love though years apart
And quilted only by one careful stitch,
Since frequent pen would perforate the chart
And bindings neither hold love nor enrich.

The Lantern and Pasque Petals

THREE AXIOMS

Only a man,	Only a man,	Only a man
Or a bird,	Never a beast,	With love
Sings.	Knows laughter.	Prays.
Song to soar	Joy companion's thought	No other spirit
Must have	And follows	Tours high
Wings.	After.	Ways.

Eternal truths can bear no downward trend;
Music and prayer and laughter all ascend.

The American Poetry Magazine

Helen Field Watson

PRAIRIE MOODS

Long have I known the prairie
Seen it mantle, darken, shift
Known it parched with summer's burning,
Crossed it piled with winter's drift.
Often have I heard its sighings,
Watched green billows slope and swell
As the coarse grass stood up waist-high
And the June breeze rose and fell.
Yes, I have viewed its flowers
Smiling in their dainty sheen,
Coily adding to the beauty
That was born to blush unseen.
True, I have feared the prairie
As I gauged the mighty sweep
Of its undulating vastness,
Awesome as the upper deep.
And I have loathed the prairie
When its freedom was a pain,
Where no hills could hold the furies
Hurtling through the wind and rain.
Yet still I love the prairie
With its subtle, luring call.
Beauty, promise, vastness, wildness,
Clutch my fancy, hold me thrall.

Fannie B. Williams

OF HOMING BIRDS AND ME

Like men, birds love a landmark to go home to.
For hours on end the swallows circle around
The tall church tower; creatures of eerie distance,
They yet prefer an object like a spire
That stands out snug amid the boundlessness
Of vaulting space. The gulls delight to swarm
About an old sea-hulk whose days are numbered,
And there declare a holiday from time . . .
To loop, and dive, and settle on the waters,
Unswamped by waves that might upset a ship.
And mark the little downies of the forest!
From tree to tree they flutter, small as sprites
Such gad-about, they seem to scorn all places;
But take one from the forest and right soon
You'll see him heading, like a homing pigeon,
Off and away to find the trees once more.
And for a snug-fast and a happy harbor
The blue bird loves an old fence post the best,
That stands close by an arbor or a trellis;
And there he dwells, contented stay-at-home,
To rear his little brood, and send them questing
Like him, to find a hollow in a post.
The crows seek out a scraggly old live-oak,
And there they crouch, as twilight settles down,
Black ogres cawing over the endless hours.
But now enough of birds that head for home,
For I must turn — my wanderlust forgotten —
From winding ways that distance gave a charm,
To well-worn paths, and well-remembered highways,
Like birds that, wandering, seek always a home.

Richard Leroy Williams

SPRING STREET

Here is a street that overflows with sunshine
This crystal morning, for all the trees are bare,
Stretching eager, but still empty fingers
To catch the fragrance of the earthless air —
Forsythia shows like sunshine turned to blossoms,
And all the shrubs have shreds of green to wear —
Then comes a call of joy, the sway of a branch,
And a robin's breast burns like an ember there.

Christian Science Monitor, May 1946

OCTOBER

What can you ask more than a day
That sets gold leaves against the gray
Of rain-worn walls, or on a sky
Bluer than lakes where white gulls cry,
And calls the yellow sunlight through
Thin branches groping for the blue.

Nature Magazine, October 1945

WINTER SPARROW

They are all gone but you, fellow without a song
But a chirp that fringes the silence all day long
Like a silver gleam of ice by the sunny eaves at noon,
And a merry warm little heart, when the wind is a misty croon,
And a roguish sparrow eye that sets the day a-glow
In the time when shadows trace gray patterns on the snow.

Christian Science Monitor, Dec. '44

Allen E. Woodall

HOUR OF THE HERON

One blue heron, standing tall
In the evening light of water and sky,
And as our car came whispering by,
A burst of wings was over all.
Two and three herons rowed them down
In long slow rhythm of winnowing, —
Head and feet and beak and wing . . .
And a blue to cry the water down.
We stopped and stared as beauty came
On long stilt legs to stalk the pool
Where early evening comes to rule
While sunset seals the west in flame.

Christian Science Monitor, Oct. '45

INTERVAL

Four-thirty and no dawn, the moonlight still
Lay like unmelted frost upon the sill
Of our tomorrow, with half-opened door,
While our today, like a train with dwindling roar,
Withdrew, and lost itself against the sky;
And owls talked in silence — by and bye
The door would open, the moon ebb away,
And dawn be waiting in her rose and gray.

Christian Science Monitor, Dec. '44

RED SQUIRREL

Here in the rosy morning light
The trees are clad in burnished white, —
Each twig a miracle of frost,
Each blade of grass, entraced, embossed,
And there . . . a thing beyond belief,
A squirrel like a flaming leaf.

Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 2, '45

Allen E. Woodall

YOU WALKED BESIDE ME

You walked beside me all the way
I had to go . . .
Of course I know
You really left me at the gate
Beside the playing field
Where the purple thistles wait . . .
And yet, because it was a lovely day,
You walked beside me all the way.

Christian Science Monitor, 1945

FOR A TEACHER

No one can say of a teacher that her life
Has ended here. When the last bell has rung
And the last footsteps and receding laughter
Leave the halls quiet . . . the last echoes flung
As from the throat of a bell . . . her life goes on
Endlessly, strongly, sure as the breath of spring
Creating somewhere, under a winter moon.
The earth-glad beauty of awakening.

Minnesota Journal of Education

Allen E. Woodall

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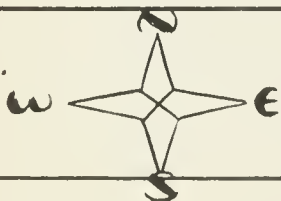
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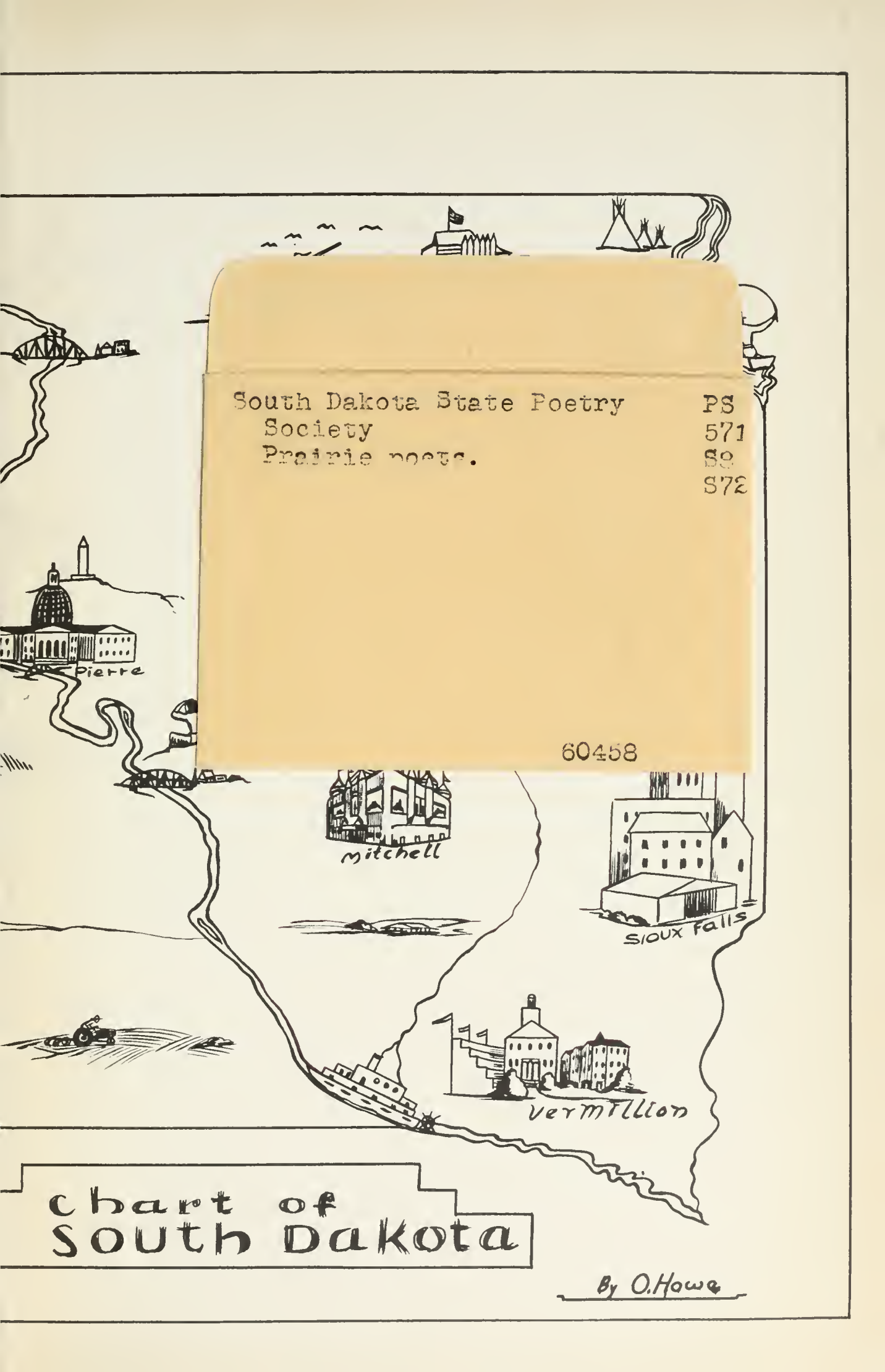


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